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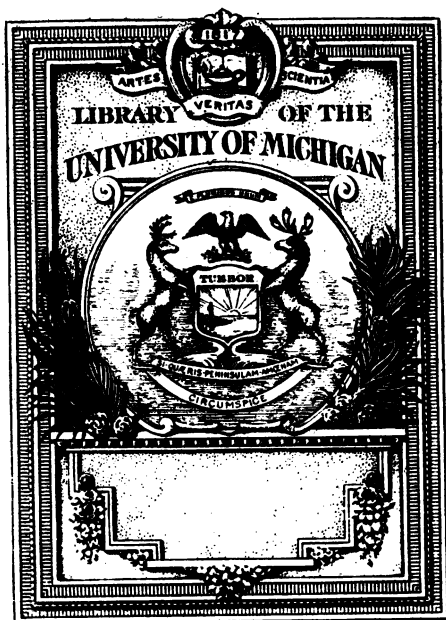
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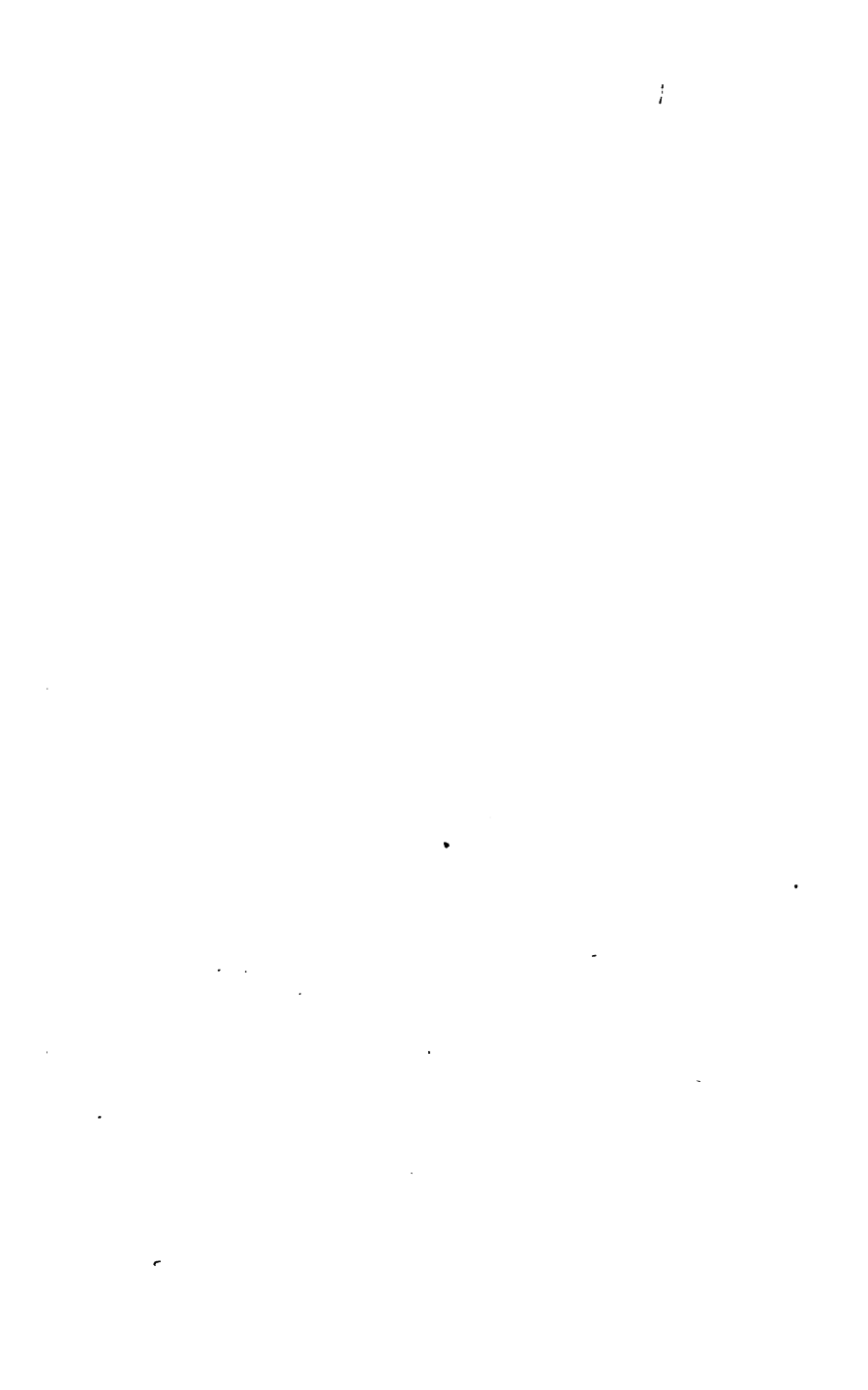
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HISTORY
OF
THE ROMAN EMPIRE,



FROM
THE ACCESSION OF AUGUSTUS
TO
THE END OF THE EMPIRE OF THE WEST;

BY
THOMAS KEIGHTLEY.

THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:
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1850.

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1850

PREFACE.

THE present work completes my History of Rome. Instead, however, of entitling it a second volume, I have made it a distinct work: for having been induced to depart from my original plan, and write a History of England after finishing that of the Roman Republic, and fearing lest some event might occur to prevent my completing my design, I was desirous that a work on which I had employed so much time and thought should not present an imperfect appearance. A further motive was, that some persons were of opinion that the History of the Empire would not be read so generally in schools as that of the Republic, and I wished to shun the imputation of forcing any one to buy a volume that he might not want.

This last opinion I am disposed to regard as erroneous. There is no part of the Roman history more necessary to be read in classical schools than the reigns of Augustus and his successors to the end of that of Domitian; for without a knowledge of the history of that period, the writers of the Augustan age, and Juvenal, cannot be fully understood. Of this period we have actually no history, at least none adapted to schools, and hence arises the imperfect acquaintance with the historic allusions in Horace and the other poets which most readers possess, in consequence of being obliged to derive their information piecemeal from annotations. I have, therefore, taken especial care in the present volume to obviate this inconvenience; and I believe that scarcely any historic allusion in those poets will be found unnoticed.

Another feature of this work is, the sketch of the history of the Church, its persecutions, sects, and heresies, during the first four centuries, with brief notices of the principal Fathers and their writings. To write a history of the Roman Empire without including that of the Church, would have been absurd; but as readers might not have sufficient confidence in me as an ecclesiastical guide, and as my works are chiefly designed for youth, I have deemed it the safer course to take as my usual authority the learned and candid Mosheim, whose works have stood the test of nearly a century, and are always included in the list of those recommended to students in divinity. It is the work *De rebus Christianis ante Constantinum*, in the excellent translation of Mr. Vidal, that I have chiefly used. At the same time I must declare that I am by no means a stranger to the Fathers. Many years ago I had occasion to read them a good deal, and the opinions which I then formed of them as writers and teachers have been confirmed by my renewed acquaintance with their works.

The advantages, therefore, to be derived by students from this volume are, illustrations of the Latin poets, some knowledge of the early history of the Church, and tolerably correct ideas of the causes and course of the decline and fall of the mighty empire whose rise and progress have been traced in the History of Rome. Nearly one half of it, it will be observed, is devoted to the history anterior to the commencement of Gibbon's work, which begins with the reign of Commodus. As I have already said, that part of the history is not generally accessible; and with respect to the remainder, few, I believe, would willingly put Gibbon into the hands of youth.

As this work concludes the series of my histories, the following remarks may perhaps be made without incurring the imputation of vanity or presumption.

Μόνη θυρεόν τῇ Ἀληθείᾳ has been my maxim in all my his-

torical writings. Any departure from the truth is at best mere folly, for it is sure to be sooner or later detected and exposed. To adhere to this rule, however, in writing a History of England, for example, was no easy task, yet I am convinced that my impartiality in even the most trying portions of that history will be at length generally acknowledged. There is no doubt less merit in being an impartial narrator of the history of Greece and Rome; still experience shows that even there passion and prejudice have ample room for display. By some I am accused of illiberality on account of my hostility to democracy and to the church of Rome: my reply is, I detest despotism under all its forms, and I view these as unmitigated tyrannies, and as those from which the world has most danger at present to apprehend. That I am no admirer of monarchic despotism, the following pages will sufficiently prove.

Readers will perhaps discern that events in the latter part of this volume are not always related in strict accordance with the corresponding part of my Outlines of History. The very extensive sale which that work has had, will perhaps testify for its general correctness. I am, therefore, not ashamed to confess that it is not free from imperfection, and the most incorrect part happens to be that just now alluded to, owing to my having in it incautiously followed the guidance of the celebrated Müller. The errors, however, are not of any very great magnitude; and I believe I have only shared the general fate of those who compile history—a fate from which Gibbon himself was not exempt. It is most unfortunate that that work was stereotyped in the first impression (a thing that never should be done), and thus improvement and correction were almost totally precluded. Let it also be recollected that it was the rapid product of eleven weeks' labour.

The same attention has been directed to chronology and geography as in my other histories. The Roman proper

names had become so confused in this period, that it was not possible for me to mark the *prænomina* and arrange names under their *gentes*, as I have so carefully done in the History of Rome. I have further employed the modern forms of the names, as it would have seemed mere affectation to use Vespasianus, Constantinus, etc.

August 26, 1840.

The present edition has been corrected throughout, and a few notes have been added. Were I called upon to say which of my histories makes the nearest approach to my own idea of perfection, I should be tempted to say that of the Roman Empire; yet it has been by far the least successful. This however will not surprise any one who reflects how much at variance its accounts of the early Church, drawn from testimony and documents, not from imagination, are with the notions respecting it now so prevalent. Time will prove that truth alone has been my guide.

My History of England has had the same kind of erroneous views to contend with; but every day is showing more and more its correctness and impartiality. I am told that copies of the 8vo edition (which is now out of print) will fetch any price the seller may demand; and I have had the gratification of seeing it translated into German on the recommendation of Dr. Lappenberg the learned author of the History of the Anglo-Saxons, the best authority perhaps on the subject on the Continent. I have, since the publication of this work, written a History of India, and with it, as far as I can see, my labours, not useless ones I trust, in this department of literature, have terminated.

T. K.

January 10, 1850.

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HISTORY

OF

THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

PART I.

THE CÆSARIAN FAMILY.

CHAPTER I.*

C. JULIUS CÆSAR OCTAVIANUS AUGUSTUS.

A.U. 725-746. B.C. 29-8.

The Roman Empire.—Regulation of it by Augustus.—Augustus in Spain—in Asia.—Laws.—Family of Augustus.—Death of Agrippa.—German wars.—Death of Drusus, and of Mæcenas.—Literature.

THE battle of Actium, fought between M. Antonius and C. Cæsar Octavianus in the 723rd† year of Rome, terminated the contest for the supreme power in the Roman state which had continued for so many years. After the death of his rival, Cæsar, now in the thirty-fourth year of his age, saw himself the undoubted master of the Roman world. An army of forty-four legions‡ regarded him as its chief; the civil wars and the proscription had cut off all the men of eminence at Rome; the senate and people vied with each other in their willingness to accept a sovereign: and though we may despise their servility, reason will evince that they were right in their determination; for he must be strangely enthralled by sounds, who,

* Authorities: Velleius Paterculus, Suetonius, Dion Cassius. For a full account of the authorities for this History see Appendix (A).

† We shall use the Varronian chronology in this volume, as it is the one followed by Tacitus, Dion, and other historians.

‡ Orosius, vi. 18. These legions however were far from complete, some of them being mere skeletons.

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under the name of allies possessed a certain degree of independence in their internal relations, but their external policy was under the control of Rome*. As aristocracy and democracy are equally tyrannic to subjects, the oppressions of the *proconsuls* and *proprætors* set over the provinces by the republic, had been such† as to make the provincials look forward with hope to the establishment of a monarchy at Rome. Such then was the condition of the Roman world at the time when our narrative commences.

When intelligence of the death of Antonius reached Rome, the senate hastened to decree to Cæsar the tribunician power for life, a casting-voice in all the tribunals, the power of nominating to all the priesthoods, and various other honours. They ordered that he should be named in all the public prayers, and libations be poured to him at both public and private entertainments. It was directed that the temple of Janus should be closed, as war was now at an end‡.

Cæsar meantime having regulated the affairs of Egypt, over which he placed Cn. Cornelius Gallus as governor§, set out on his return for Rome. He spent the winter in the province of Asia, adjusting the affairs of the surrounding countries; and during his abode there the Parthian king Phraates sent his son to him to be conducted as a hostage to Rome. In the summer (725) he proceeded to Italy, and on coming to Rome he celebrated a triumph of three days' duration for his own victories at Actium and Alexandria, and those of his lieutenants in Dalmatia and Pannonia. He distributed money to the people; he paid all his debts and forgave his debtors; and the abundance of money became so great in Rome, that the rate of interest fell two-thirds||.

We are told that at this time Cæsar had serious thoughts of laying down his power and restoring the republic, and that he consulted with his friends Agrippa and Mæcenas on the subject. The historian Dion Cassius has composed speeches for these two eminent men, the former of whom he makes advocate, though with but feeble reasons, the cause of the republic, while the latter lays down the whole system of the

* These allies were either kings or republics. The former were those of Judæa, of the Arabs, the Nabathæans, Comagene, Cilicia, Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Armenia, Thrace, Numidia; the latter, Cydonia and Lampæa in Crete, Cyzicus, Rhodes, Athens, Tyre and Sidon, Lycia, and the Ligurians of the Maritime Alps.

† See Hist. of Rome, p. 287.

‡ See his Life in our Virgil.

§ Dion, li. 19, 20. Suet. Oct. 31.

|| Dima, li. 23. Suet. Oct. 41.

future monarchy. It is almost needless to state that these cannot be genuine speeches, yet the consultation may have been held. Cæsar was of a cautious temper; he had the fate of his uncle the dictator before his eyes; and a conspiracy of young Lepidus, the son of the triumvir and nephew of Brutus, to assassinate him on his return to the city, had lately been discovered, and the author put to death by Mæcenas, who had the charge of the city*; while the examples of Sulla and Pompeius showed him that power might be resigned with safety. Still it is difficult to believe that he could have really intended to divest himself of his authority.

The counsel of Mæcenas having prevailed, or such being his previous resolution, Cæsar prepared to establish his power on a firm basis. The object which he proposed was to frame a constitution which under the forms of the republic should be in reality a disguised military monarchy. With this view he conceived it necessary that the senate should be limited in number and respectable in character; whereas it was at this time in a state of the utmost degradation: for the dictator, out of hatred to the aristocracy, had introduced all kinds of rabble into it, and after his death M. Antonius had for money or out of favour admitted any one that chose to seek the dignity†, so that the senators were now upwards of a thousand in number. Cæsar adopted the following course of reformation. Having caused himself and Agrippa to be chosen censors, instead of arbitrarily ejecting unworthy persons from the senate he made them judges of their own qualifications. Fifty were thus induced to resign voluntarily; he then compelled one hundred and forty more to follow their example, and having thus got rid of the most disreputable portion he went no further in his reformation for the present. As the patrician families had been greatly reduced by the civil wars, he augmented their number. In order to obviate the danger of civil commotions he renewed the regulation of his uncle for preventing the senators from visiting the provinces without permission, excepting Sicily and Narbonese Gaul. To quiet their apprehensions on account of the late troubles, and prevent their forming any designs against himself in consequence of them, he assured them that he had burned all the papers of M. Antonius, and he had in fact burned some, but he retained the greater part to use if he found it necessary.

The title of Imperator (*general*) had been already conferred

* Vell. Pat. ii. 88. Suet. Oct. 19.

† Suet. Oct. 35.

on Cæsar as on his uncle*; and in his sixth consulate (726), when he formed the list of the senators, he received the denomination of *Princeps Senatus* (*First-of-the-Senate*), according to the old republican custom, and this he always used as his favourite title. Having forgiven all debts due to the state and burnt the securities, gratified the people with shows, and done other popular acts, Cæsar (727) addressed the senate, requesting them to take the government now into their own hands and to permit him to retire to the enjoyment of a private station. He was heard with various emotions; a few only were in the secret and knew his object; there were some who were willing to take him at his word, but the greater number had a horror of the anarchy and turbulence of a republic; all therefore united from different motives in calling on him not to resign his authority. He yielded with well-feigned reluctance. The supreme power was conferred on him by a decree of the senate and people, and double pay was voted to his guards to increase their vigilance and fidelity.

Cæsar thus attained his object, the legal establishment of his power; but he refused to receive it for more than a period of ten years, alleging that by that time the state would be brought to a condition of order and tranquillity. He further, though accepting the charge of superintendence over the whole empire, would not assume the direct government of all the provinces; but making a division of them into two classes, committed the more peaceful and orderly, such as Africa, Asia, Bætic Spain, to the senate and people; while he reserved to himself the administration of the more warlike and turbulent, such as Gaul, northern Spain, and Egypt. The governors of the former were to be selected by the senate out of their own body by lot; they were to hold their office for the space of a year under the title of Proconsul, whether they had been consuls or not; their jurisdiction was to be purely civil, and they were therefore neither to carry swords nor wear the military habit. Cæsar himself was to appoint directly the governors of the remaining provinces; they were to be named *Legates* and *Proprætors*, to continue in office as long as he pleased, and to wear a sword and the military habit as having the power of life and death over the soldiery. A

* Hence our word *Emperor*. It was usually bestowed by the soldiers on their general after a victory. It now became the constant title of the monarch, being prefixed instead of postfixed (as in the ordinary way) to his name.

proconsul was to be preceded by twelve, a prætor by six dictors. Quæstors appointed by Cæsar were to be sent into all the provinces to collect and regulate the revenue, and all the governors and inferior officers were to receive fixed salaries, and not to be allowed to pay themselves as under the republic.

The senate decreed at this time that laurels should be placed before the doors of Cæsar's house on the Palatium, and an oak-leaf-crown be suspended over them, to indicate that he was perpetual victor over the enemies of the state and perpetual preserver of the citizens. It was also proposed to confer on him some peculiar appellation. He himself would have preferred that of Romulus, as being a second founder of the state; but finding that it would excite suspicion of his aiming at royalty, he acquiesced in that of Augustus, which was proposed by L. Munatius Plancus, and which indicated a certain degree of modesty*.

Augustus (as we shall henceforth name him) having thus laid the foundations of his power, quitted Rome under the pretext of completing the conquest of Britain†. Finding Gaul in an unsettled state, he remained some time there to reduce it to order. The incursions of the Asturians and Cantabrians into the Roman provinces in Spain then induced him to assume the conduct of the war against them. He however found them a foe in contending with whom little glory was to be acquired; for they would not descend from their mountains and give battle in the plain, and they harassed his troops by ambushes in the woody glens. Vexation and fatigue causing him to fall sick, he retired to Tarraco, leaving the command with C. Antistius, by whom and T. Carisius some advantages were gained over these mountaineers. Augustus then discharged such of the soldiers as had served out their legal time, and founded for them in Lusitania a town named Augusta Emerita (*Merida*). He then returned to Rome (730), having been absent during the better part of three years. He had hardly however quitted Spain, when the Cantabrians and Asturians again took arms; and though the prætor L. Æmilius chastised them, these hardy mountaineers were never properly speaking conquered, and they always retained a rude sort of independence.

* The decree was made Jan. 15. On the following night the Tiber overflowed (Dion, liii. 20). This is thought by some to be the inundation noticed by Horace, *Carm.* i. 2, which others refer to A. U. 732. Both we think are mistaken.

† Hor. *Carm.* i. 35, 29.

At this time also (730) avarice or the lust of conquest induced Augustus to order *Ælius Gallus* the governor of Egypt to undertake an expedition against the Happy Arabia*. In the attempt however to cross the sandy desert, the troops suffered so severely from the heat of the sun, the bad quality of the water, and a novel kind of disease, and they were so harassed by the native tribes, that after losing the greater part of them Gallus was obliged to give up his design; and the conquest of Arabia was never again attempted by the Romans.

Augustus it would seem long continued to be affected by the disease with which he had been first attacked in Spain. The year after his return to Rome (731) he had a fit so severe as to leave little hopes of his life; and believing himself to be near his end, he gave to *Cn. Calpurnius Piso*, his colleague in the consulate, in presence of the principal senators and knights, a book containing an account of the forces and the revenues of the state; he at the same time placed his ring on the finger of *Agrippa*, but said not a word of who should be his successor, though every one had expected him to appoint his nephew *Marcellus*, the son of his sister *Octavia*, to whom he had given in marriage his only daughter *Julia*. A physician named *Antonius Musa* however restored him to health by a system of cold bathing and cold drinking. When he recovered he wished to have his will read out in the senate, to prove that he had not named a successor, but the senators would not permit it to be done. It is doubtful whether it was his intention to restore the republic, or if he wished his place in the state to be occupied by *Agrippa*: the latter, which is more consonant to his character, seems to be the more probable supposition. The senate now conferred on him the tribunician power for life, gave him the power of bringing before them any matter he pleased even when not consul, and granted him a perpetual proconsular authority.

Whatever the designs of Augustus might have been with respect to *Marcellus*, they were frustrated at this time by the death of that promising youth, which took place at *Baiæ*

* *Dion*, l. ii. 20. *Strabo*, xvi. p. 730; xvii. p. 319. *Plin.* N. H. vi. 28. *Horace* seems to refer to this expedition, *Carm.* i. 29.

† The former decree of this power (above, p. 3) had not, it would seem, been carried into effect. *Tacitus* (*Ann.* iii. 56) says that Augustus devised the term *tribunicia potestas*; while *Dion* (xlii. 26) asserts that it was conferred on *Cæsar* the dictator. *Lipsius* reconciles them by showing that *Cæsar* did not use it publicly.

in the twentieth year of his age, an event which caused a general grief, as he had inherited the amiable qualities of his mother Octavia, and was beloved of all people*.

Augustus had now been consul for nine successive years, and feeling his power sufficiently established he regarded that dignity as no longer needful to him. The consuls therefore for the year 732 were M. Claudius Marcellus and L. Aruntius; but the year proving to be one of disease and scarcity, the superstitious people fancied that their calamities arose from Augustus' not being consul, and surrounded the senate-house, threatening to burn the senate in it if they did not proclaim him dictator; then, seizing the rods of the twenty-four lictors, they brought them to him, imploring him to assume that office and also that of overseer of the corn-market. The latter he accepted; but, satisfied with possessing all the power of the dictatorship, he declined the invidious title, and even rent his garments when the people would have forced him to accept it. He in like manner declined the censorship for life when it was proffered to him, but he always used a censorian authority.

Beloved as Augustus was by the people in general, there were still some unquiet spirits at Rome who could not submit to the rule of a single person how moderate soever it might be. A conspiracy against Augustus was detected at this time, at the head of which was Fannius Cæpio, and in which L. Murræna, the brother-in-law of Mæcenas, was said to be implicated. They made no defence on their trial, and being found guilty by their judges, they were put to death.

Augustus now resolved to visit and regulate the eastern parts of the empire, and leaving Rome he first proceeded to Sicily (733). While he was there the consular elections at Rome gave occasion to so much tumult and disturbance, that his return was eagerly desired and urged by the more prudent citizens. He would not however comply with their wishes; but in order to keep the city in order, he summoned Agrippa from Asia, where he was then residing; and having made him divorce his wife (though she was his own niece), and marry Julia the widow of Marcellus†, he committed to

* Propert. liii. 18. See Virg. *Æn.* vi. 861 *seq.* Livia was accused of poisoning him (Dion, liii. 33).

† Mæcenas, when consulted on this occasion, is reported to have said to him, "You have made him (Agrippa) so great that he must either be your son-in-law or be put to death."

him the government of Rome, where his able administration speedily restored order and tranquillity.

From Sicily, Augustus, attended by his stepson Tiberius Nero, proceeded to Greece; and having regulated the affairs of that now insignificant country, he passed over to Samos, where he spent the winter. In the spring (734) he proceeded to Asia and thence to Syria. He arranged all matters concerning the petty monarchies which were in alliance with or under the protection of Rome*, and then returned to Samos for the winter. Here he received numerous embassies from various nations, among which was one from the Indians to ratify the treaty of peace and amity the terms of which had been already arranged. Among the presents which the envoys brought, was a man without arms, who bent a bow and shot arrows and held a trumpet to his mouth with his feet. They also presented him with some tigers, being the first of this species ever brought to Europe†.

While Augustus was in Asia, Phraates the Parthian king, who had hitherto eluded the fulfilment of his engagement to restore the standards and prisoners taken from Crassus and Antonius, fearing a war, hastened to perform it. We are not informed of the number of soldiers thus restored to their country, but they probably bore only a small proportion to the number originally captured; for many were dead, and many more preferred remaining in a country to which they had now become habituated. By Augustus himself this was always regarded as the most glorious event in his life, and to commemorate it he built a temple on the Capitol to Mars the Avenger (*Ultor*), in which he placed the recovered standards‡, while the poets who adorned his reign poured forth their strains in commemoration of the peaceful triumph§.

A new sedition on account of the consular elections, which proceeded even to bloodshed, recalled Augustus to Rome (735). The senate as usual would have lavished honours on him, but he would only allow of the erection of an altar to Fortuna

* It was at this time that he sent Tiberius with an army to settle a disputed claim to the throne of Armenia. Some of the Epistles of Horace (i. 3. 8, and perhaps 9. and ii. 2) were written at this period. See also Ep. i. 12, 26 *seq.*

† Dion, liv. 9. Pliny, N. H. viii. 17.

‡ Dion, liv. 8. See Becker, Handbuch, etc. i. 371.

§ Hor. Epist. i. 18, 56; Carm. iv. 15, 6. Propert. ii. 10; iii. 4, 9; 5, 48; iv. 6, 79. Ovid. Fast. v. 580; Trist. ii. 228. See also Virg. *Æn.* vii. 606. Hor. Carm. iii. 5.

Redux, and the insertion of the day of his return among the public holidays under the title of Augustalia. He was appointed inspector of manners for five years, and given the censorian power for the same period, and the consular for life. Agrippa was at this time in Spain; for after he had established order at Rome he found it necessary to proceed to Gaul, which was suffering from sedition and from the incursions of the Germans, whence he was called to Spain by a new insurrection of the Cantabrians. Having, not without much difficulty, subdued this restless people, he returned to Rome, declining, with his usual moderation, the triumphal honours which had been decreed him on the proposal of Augustus himself.

The senate being still too numerous a body for the place in the state which Augustus wished to occupy, he thought he might now venture to make a further reduction in it. But the difficulties which he encountered were such, that instead of bringing it down as he proposed to three hundred, he was obliged to be content with a house consisting of six hundred members. Even this moderate reduction gave occasion to several real or imputed conspiracies against him and Agrippa.

To keep up a respectable aristocracy in the state was a favourite object with this prudent prince, who was well-aware of the evils of oligarchy and democracy. It was with this view that he laboured to render the senate limited in number and respectable in character. As a further means, he most anxiously, both by law and precept, encouraged marriage among the members of the senatorian and equestrian orders (736)*. But the profligacy of manners which then prevailed was such that all the honours and rewards and immunities which he proposed were of but little avail. A practice was even introduced by which the intention of the laws might be eluded, while the benefits proposed by them were attained:—it was that of betrothal with infants, to obviate which he enjoined that no betrothal should be valid except in cases where the marriage might be consummated within the space of two years; that is, with no child under ten years of age. It was unfortunate for Augustus that his own character and conduct gave but little weight to his regulations on the subject of matrimony, for he was notoriously unfaithful to his wife Livia. It was indeed reported that she was so accommodating as to be herself the

* See Hor. Carm. iii. 6, 17 seq.; iv. 5, 21 seq.; 15, 9 seq.; Carm. Sac. 17 seq.

agent in securing a constant supply of maidens for him*; but the more probable account is that she only winked at his aberrations†.

It may be of use to give here some account of the family of Augustus. By his first wife Scribonia he had one child, a daughter, named of course Julia; he had no children by Livia, and we hear nothing of any natural children. He first married Julia to his nephew Marcellus, the son of his sister Octavia by her first husband C. Claudius Marcellus; and on his death he obliged Agrippa to divorce his wife, who was the sister of Marcellus, and espouse the widow, by whom he had two sons, named Caius and Lucius, both of whom Augustus adopted. By her first husband Tib. Claudius Nero Livia had two sons, Tiberius and Drusus, the latter of whom was born after her marriage with Augustus. The former was married to Agrippina the daughter of Agrippa by his first wife, a daughter of Cicero's friend Atticus‡.

In the 737th year of Rome Augustus and Agrippa celebrated with great magnificence the Sæcular Games§. Augustus then deemed it advisable to absent himself for some time from Rome, and having sent Agrippa to Asia, he proceeded to Gaul on the pretext of the invasions of the Germans requiring his presence; but some said that his secret motive was the desire of enjoying more freely the society of Terentia the wife of Mæcenas, with whom he had long carried on an intrigue. He took with him his stepson Tiberius, and after an absence of about three years spent in regulating the concerns of Gaul, Spain, and the German provinces, he returned to Rome (741)||, and in the following year (742) he assumed the dignity of Pontifex Maximus, now vacant by the death of Lepidus his former colleague in the triumvirate, whom (though he at all times treated him with studied indignity) he allowed to hold that honourable office as long as he lived.

Agrippa, who had been all this time in Asia, returned to Rome likewise in 741; and Augustus, whose confidence in him never abated, had the tribunician power conferred on him for another period of five years. He also committed to him

* *Ut ferunt*, Suet. Oct. 71.

† Dion, lvi. 2. Zonar. x. 38: comp. Tac. Ann. v. i.

‡ For the genealogy of the Cæsarian family from C. Julius Cæsar to Nero see Appendix (B).

§ They were the fifth that had been celebrated. Dion, liv. 18. Censorin. 17. Horace composed the hymn sung on the occasion.

|| Hor. Carm. iii. 14.

the charge of suppressing an expected invasion of the Pan-nonians. This people however laid aside all thoughts of war when they heard of the approach of Agrippa, who therefore led back his troops. In the following spring (742) he fell dangerously ill in Campania. Augustus, who was then celebrating the festival of the Quinquatrus at Rome, hastened to him, but found him dead. He caused the corpse to be conveyed to Rome, where he himself pronounced the funeral oration over it in the Forum, and then laid his ashes in his own monument, though the deceased had prepared one for himself in the Field of Mars. Agrippa had not completed his fifty-first year when he was thus prematurely carried off*.

There are few characters in history more pleasing to contemplate than that of M. Vipsanius Agrippa. Born in an humble station, he raised himself entirely by his own merit and by the honourable fidelity which he always exhibited to the man to whose fortunes he was attached. To prince and people he was equally acceptable: the former viewed in him a sincere friend and an able minister and general, the latter regarded him as a patron and a benefactor. His wealth, which was immense†, he devoted to the public service, benefiting the people and adorning the city. He thus raised at a great expense several aqueducts, particularly that which conveyed the Aqua Virgo to the Field of Mars (735). He adorned (728) the porticoes built round the Septa in the same place by Lepidus with marble plates and with paintings, naming them Julian in honour of Augustus. He also built a beautiful portico to the temple of Neptune and erected the circular temple named the Pantheon‡, which still exists. By his will he left his gardens and the baths named after him to the Roman people. Augustus, who was his principal heir, gave in his name a donation of one hundred drachmas a man to the plebeians.

The place of Agrippa was not to be supplied; but as some one in his station was absolutely necessary to Augustus, he, much against his inclination, made choice of his stepson Tiberius. As he seems to have made it a rule that the per-

* Plin. N. H. vii. 8.

† He owned the entire Chersonese (Dion, liv. 29); he had also large estates in Sicily (Hor. Ep. i. 12) and elsewhere.

‡ Dion (liii. 27) gives two reasons for the name; one that it is dome-shaped like the heaven, the other that it contained the statues of many gods. The two principal were Mars and Venus. Becker (Röm. Alter. i. 635) infers that it was consecrated to the gods of the Julian *gens*.

son next to himself should be the husband of his daughter Julia, he obliged Tiberius to divorce Agrippina, the daughter of Agrippa, to whom he was most sincerely attached, and who had borne him one child and was bearing another, and espouse Julia. He then sent him against the Pannonians, who had resumed their arms when they heard of the death of Agrippa.

We will now for some time direct our attention to the foreign relations and military affairs of the empire.

Within the limits of the empire the only people who ventured to resist the arms of Rome was the Basque population of the mountains in the north of Spain, who, secured by the nature of their country, though often defeated and reduced, were never completely conquered. On the southern frontier in Africa the native tribes gave occasional employment to the governors of the adjoining provinces. In the year 732, the Æthiopians, led by their queen Candace, invaded Upper Egypt, and advanced as far as the city of Elephantina; but they were speedily repelled by the governor C. Petronius, who invaded their country in return, and forced them to sue for peace. On the side of Parthia all was quiet during the reign of Augustus; but the tribes, in the vicinity of the Danube and Rhine, who were destined to be Rome's most dangerous foes, even now required the employment of large armies to repel or subdue them, and more than once they sent alarm even into the city.

The reduction of Thrace to a province gave occasion to some warfare; for the native tribes, unused to submission, and defended by the ranges of Rhodope and Hæmus, were prone to rebellion. A general rising among them took place in 743; and, after lasting three years, it was at length suppressed by the governor L. Piso, who thereby obtained the triumphal honours.

The Roman frontier had in the latter times of the republic been gradually advanced into Illyricum, the region lying to the north of the Adriatic, and commercial relations were formed with the nations who dwelt further inland. Their own unquiet spirit and the arrogance and oppression of the Romans naturally gave occasion to hostilities. In 738 two of the Alpine tribes named Cammunians and Venians took arms, but they were speedily reduced by P. Silius the prætor. Immediately after, the Pannonians aided by the Noricans invaded Istria; but they were repelled also by Silius,

who then carried his arms into Noricum and reduced it. Shortly after, the Rastians of the Alps, and the Vindelicans* who dwelt between them and the Danube, began to make incursions into Gaul and Italy, and they seized and put to death such of the Romans or allies as they found travelling through their country. Augustus committed the task of reducing them to his stepson Drusus, who gave them a defeat in the hills of Tridentum (*Trent*); and, as they still plundered Gaul, he caused Drusus' brother Tiberius to attack them on that side; and by the united efforts of the two brothers and their lieutenants, the mountaineers were completely brought under subjection†. The more vigorous portion of their male population was carried away, and only those left who were too feeble for insurrection. The Pannonic war already alluded to broke out in 743. It was conducted and unsuccessfully terminated by Tiberius, who was decreed for it a triumph by the senate, but Augustus would only allow him to receive the triumphal ornaments.

Drusus was meantime carrying on war in Germany. The Roman dominion having been extended by Cæsar the dictator to the Rhine, the Ubians, Vangionians, and some other German tribes‡ had been induced to cross that river and settle on its left bank under the protection and authority of the Romans, whose manners they gradually adopted. The territory in which they dwelt was hence named the Upper and Lower Germany; it extended from the modern town of Schlettstadt into the district of Cleves. The Romans had several fortified posts along the Rhine, but they had as yet no footing beyond that river. They had however the usual relations of trade and intercourse with the peoples of the opposite bank.

In 729 the Germans murdered some Romans who had gone over in the usual manner into their country. To punish them, M. Vinicius, who commanded on the left bank of the river, led his troops against them, and his successes gained him the honour of the triumphal ornaments. Nothing further occurred till the year 738, when the tribes named Sicambrians, Usipetans and Tencterans seized and crucified the

* Dion (liv. 22) mentions only the Rastians, but he appears to include the Vindelicans in that name. The Vindelicans are expressly mentioned by Suetonius (Tib. 9), Velleius (ii. 95), and Horace (Carm. iv. 4, 18).

† See Horace, Carm. iv. 4 and 14.

‡ See Appendix (C.) for an account of the German tribes.

Roman traders in their country, and then crossing the Rhine savaged Gaul and the Germanies. M. Lollius the legate led his troops to engage them; but they laid an ambush for the cavalry, which was in advance, and routed it. In the pursuit they came unexpectedly on Lollius himself, and defeated him, taking the eagle of the fifth legion. The intelligence of this disgrace caused, as we have seen, Augustus to set out for Gaul; but the Germans did not wait for his arrival, and when he came they obtained a truce on giving hostages.

Augustus remained nearly three years in Gaul. When leaving it (741) he committed the defence of the German frontier to his stepson Drusus. His departure emboldened the Sicambrians and their allies to resume hostilities, and as disaffection appeared likely to spread among the Gauls, Drusus took care to secure their leading men by inviting them to Lugdunum (*Lyon*) under pretext of the festival which was to be celebrated at the altar raised there in honour of Augustus: then watching the Germans when they passed the Rhine, he fell on and cut them to pieces, and crossing that river himself, he entered the country of the Usipetans, and thence advanced into that of the Sicambrians, laying both waste (742). He embarked his troops on the Rhine and entered the ocean, and sailing along the coast formed an alliance with the Frisians who inhabited it. His slight vessels, however, being stranded by the ebb of the tide on the coast of the Chaucans, he was indebted for safety to his Frisian allies. He then led his troops back, and put them into winter-quarters. In the spring (743) he again crossed the Rhine, and completed the subjection of the Usipetans; and taking advantage of the absence of the Sicambrian warriors, who had marched against the Cattans on account of their refusal to join their league, he threw a bridge over the Lippe (*Lippa*), and marching rapidly through the Sicambrian country and entering that of the Cherusicans, advanced as far as the Weser (*Visurgis*). Want of supplies, however, forced the Romans to return without passing that river. In their retreat they were harassed by the Germans, and on one occasion they fell into an ambush, where they were only saved from destruction by the excessive confidence of the enemy, who, regarding them as already conquered, attacked them in disorder, and were therefore easily repelled by the disciplined legionaries. Drusus built a fort at the confluence of the Elision and the Lippe, and another in the Cattan country on

the Rhine, and then returned to Gaul for the winter. The following year (744), Augustus, on account of the German war, went and took up his abode at Lugdunum, while Drusus again crossed the Rhine, and carried on the war against the Sicambrian league, which had now been joined by the Cattans, who became in consequence the principal sufferers. At the end of the campaign Augustus and his stepsons returned to Rome.

The next year (745) Drusus passed the Rhine for the fourth time. He laid waste the Cattan territory, whence he advanced into Suevia, which he treated in a similar manner, routing all that resisted him; then entering the Cheruscan country, he crossed the Weser, and advanced till he reached the Elbe (*Albis*), wasting all on his way. Having made a fruitless effort to pass this river, he led back his troops to the Rhine; but his horse having fallen with him on the way, he received so much injury by the fall, that he died before he reached the banks of that stream*. His body was conveyed to Rome, where the funeral orations were pronounced by Augustus and Tiberius, and his ashes were deposited in the Julian monument. The title of Germanicus was decreed to him and his children, and among other honours a cenotaph was raised by the army on the bank of the Rhine.

Drusus was only in his thirtieth year when he thus met with his untimely fate. He was married to the younger daughter of Octavia by M. Antonius the triumvir, by whom he had several children; but only three, Germanicus, Claudius and Livilla, survived their father. The character of Drusus stood high both as a soldier and a citizen; and it was generally believed that he intended to restore the republic, if ever he should possess the requisite power†. It is even said that at one time he wrote to his brother proposing to compel Augustus to re-establish the popular freedom, but that Tiberius showed the letter to his stepfather‡. Some even, in the usual spirit of calumniating Augustus, went so far as to hint that he caused Drusus to be taken off by poison when he neglected to give instant obedience to his mandate of recall, issued in consequence of that information§.

Death had already (743) deprived Augustus of his sister Octavia, and within two years after the loss of Drusus he had

* Livy, Epit. 140. Strab. vii. p. 447. † Suet. Claud. 1. Tac. Ann. i. 33.

‡ Suet. Tib. 50.

§ Suet. Claud. 1. Tac. Ann. ii. 82.

to lament that of Mæcenas, his early friend, adviser, and minister, who died toward the end of the year 746, leaving him his heir, notwithstanding the affair of Terentia.

Mæcenas was a man in whom were united the apparently opposite characters of the refined voluptuary and the able and judicious statesman. When called on to exert himself in public affairs, no man displayed more foresight, vigour, and activity; but the moment he could withdraw from them, he hastened to relax into an ease and luxury almost more than feminine. Satisfied with the abundance of wealth which he derived from the bounty of Augustus, and content with having the power to bestow honours and offices on others, he sought them not for himself, and to the end of his life he remained a simple member of the equestrian order in which he had been born. It does not appear, that like Agrippa, he devoted his wealth to the improvement or ornament of the city; but he was the patron, and in some cases the benefactor, of men of letters; and while the poetry of Virgil and Horace shall be read (and when shall it not?), the name of Mæcenas will be pronounced with honour by thousands to whom that of the nobler Agrippa will be comparatively unknown. Such is the power of literature to confer everlasting renown!

This was in effect the most splendid period of Rome's literary history. Though we cannot concede that literary genius is the creation of political circumstances, yet we may observe that it usually appears synchronously with great political events. It was during the Persian and Peloponnesian wars, that the everlasting monuments of the Grecian muse were produced; and it was while the fierce wars excited by religion agitated modern Europe, that the most noble works of poetic genius appeared in Italy, Spain, and England. So also the first band of Roman poets was coexistent with the Punic wars, and the second and more glorious, though perhaps less vigorous, display of Italian genius rose amid the calamities of the civil wars.

The first of these poets in name, and as is generally thought in genius, is P. Virgilius Maro, who was born at Andes a village near Mantua, in 684, and died at Brundisium in 735. Residing in the country, and fond of rural life, his first poetic essays were pastorals in the manner of Theocritus. In this attempt however his success was not eminent; for though his verse is sweet and harmonious, and his descriptions are lovely, he attains not to the nature and simplicity of his Grecian

master. He next wrote his *Georgics*, a didactic poem on agriculture; and here his success was beyond doubt; for it is perhaps the most perfect piece of didactic poetry that the world possesses. He then made the daring attempt of competing with Homer in the fields of epic poetry; and though the *Æneis* is inferior in fire and spirit to the *Iliad*, and possesses not the romance and the domestic charms of the *Odyssey*, and as an epic must even yield to the *Jerusalem Delivered* of modern Italy, it is a poem of a very high order, and one which will never cease to yield delight to the cultivated mind. In thus selecting Roman subjects, Virgil proved his superior judgement; and he assumed the place which had been occupied by Ennius, becoming the national poet.

Q. Horatius Flaccus, born at Venusia in Apulia in 65 B.C., is distinguished for the graceful ease, mild philosophic spirit, and knowledge of men and the world*, displayed in his satires and epistles. He had also the merit of transferring the lyric measures of Alcaeus, Sappho, and other Grecian poets to the Latin language. His odes of a gay and lively or of a bland philosophic tone are inimitable; in those of a higher flight he has less success, and the appearance of effort may at times be discerned. Horace died in 746 in the same year with his friend and patron Mæcenæus.

Albius Tibullus and Sex. Aurelius Propertius wrote love-elegies addressed to their courtesan-mistresses under feigned names, such as Delia and Cynthia. The former approaches nearer than any of the ancient poets to modern sentimentality; the latter shows extensive mythologic learning, correct taste, and a degree of delicacy hardly to be expected from an amatory poet of that age.

L. Varius, C. Cornelius Gallus, P. Varro Atacinus, and a number of other poets wrote at this period. They are praised by their surviving contemporaries, but their works have perished,—a proof perhaps that their merit was not considerable. They were all imitators of the Greeks.

P. Ovidius Naso belongs to the second period of the reign of Augustus, whom he survived. He was born in 711 at Sulmo in the Pelignian country, and died in 771 in exile at Tomi on the Euxine. Ovid was a poet of original genius,

* Omne vafer vitium ridenti Flaccus amico
Tangit, et admissus circum præcordia ludit,
Callidus excusso populum suspendere naso.

Persius, Sat. i. 146.

which he tried on a variety of subjects. He wrote Heroic Epistles in the names and characters of the heroines of Grecian antiquity; Love-elegies; a didactic poem called the Art of Love, Metamorphoses, and a poem on the Roman Fasti. He also composed a tragedy, named Medea, which was much praised by the ancient critics. Grace, ease and gaiety prevail throughout the compositions of this poet; but he was perhaps deficient in vigour, and somewhat too prone to trifle on serious subjects; in his amatory poetry he was very far from imitating the delicacy of Tibullus and Propertius. Yet with all his defects he is a delightful poet. The origin of his exile to Tomi in 762 is a mystery which can never be unveiled. He ascribes it himself to two causes, his Art of Love, and his having seen something which he should not have seen. The epistles written after his exile evince a spirit quite broken, and exhibit little trace of the poet's former vivacity and animation, but they are in many respects highly interesting and valuable.

The reign of Augustus was also the period of the appearance of the eloquent and picturesque history of the Roman republic by T. Livius. This great historian was born at Padua (*Patavinum*) in 695, and he died in 771, the same year with Ovid. His history (of which the larger and more valuable part is lost) extended from the landing of *Aeneas* to the death of *Drusus* in 745.

CHAPTER II.*

AUGUSTUS [CONTINUED].

A.U. 746-767. B.C. 8-A.D. 14.

Tiberius.—Banishment of *Julia*.—German wars of *Tiberius*.—Defeat of *Varnus*.—Death and character of *Augustus*.—Form and condition of the Roman Empire.

TWENTY-ONE years had now elapsed since the return of *Augustus* victorious over *Antonius* and his assumption of the sole supreme authority in the state. In that period death had deprived him of his nephew, his nobler stepson, and his two ablest and most attached friends. His hopes now rested on his two grandsons and adopted sons *Caius* and *Lucius*, and their posthumous brother named *Agrippa* after their father; on *Tiberius*, and on the children of *Drusus*.

* Authorities: same as for the preceding chapter.

Caius was now (746) in his thirteenth year; his brother was three years younger. As they grew up, the characters which they displayed were such as caused pain to their grandfather. They were in fact *porphyrogeniti* (the first that Rome had seen), and therefore were spoiled by public and private flattery, and displayed insolence and presumption in their conduct. Though Augustus was fully aware of the defects in the character of Tiberius, he could not avoid assigning him the place in the state for which his age and his abilities and experience qualified him. He had therefore on the death of Drusus committed to him the conduct of the war in Germany, and in 746 and the following year the Roman legions were led by him over the Rhine, but no resistance was offered by the Germans. The next year (748) Augustus conferred on him the tribunician power for a period of five years, and appointed him to go to regulate Armenia, where affairs were now in some disorder*.

Tiberius, however, had resolved on retiring for a time from public life. The pretext under which he sought permission from Augustus, was a satiety of honours and a longing for quiet and repose. What he afterwards assigned as the real cause was his wish not to appear to stand in the way of Caius and his brother, who were now growing up to man's estate†. The improper conduct of his wife Julia was also given as a reason for his retirement, or his expectation by absence to increase his authority in the state in case his presence should be again required: it was even said that he was banished by Augustus for conspiring against his sons. It was with great difficulty that he obtained permission from his mother and stepfather to put his design into execution. We are told, that to extort it, he menaced to starve himself, and actually abstained from food for four days. When he had thus drawn from them a reluctant consent, he went down privately with a very few attendants to Ostia, and getting on board a vessel proceeded along the coast of Campania. Hearing that Augustus was taken ill, he halted; but finding that his so doing was imputed to a design of aiming at the empire in case of his death, he set sail though the weather was not very favourable, and proceeded on his voyage to Rhodes.

He had selected this island for his retreat, having been

* Zonaras, x. 35.

† Suet. Tib 10. Vell. Pat. ii. 99.

pleased with its amenity and salubrity, when he visited it on his return from Armenia in the year 735. He adopted a private mode of life, dwelling in a moderately-sized house, and living on terms of equality with the respectable inhabitants. He was visited in his retreat by all those who were going out as proconsuls or legates to Asia. When Caius Cæsar was sent out to regulate the affairs of Armenia (753), Tiberius passed over to Chios to wait on him. The young man showed him all marks of respect as his stepfather and elder; but the insinuations of M. Lollius, whom Augustus had given him as a director, soon alienated his mind from Tiberius.

The period of his tribunician power being now expired, Tiberius sought permission to return to Rome, avowing that his motive for quitting it had been the wish to avoid the suspicion of emulation with Caius and Lucius. As they were now grown up and were able to maintain their station as the second persons in the state, his absence he regarded as no longer requisite, and he wished to be permitted to revisit his friends and relatives. He however received a positive refusal, and all his mother could obtain was his being named a legate in order to cover his disgrace. He remained at Rhodes two years longer, when Caius, without whose approbation Augustus had determined to do nothing in his case, having quarrelled with Lollius, gave his consent to his recall. He was therefore permitted to return, but on the express condition of abstaining from public affairs (755).

During the absence of Tiberius from Rome, the dissolute conduct of his wife Julia, after having long been generally known, had at length (752) reached the ears of her father. Julia had been unchaste even when the wife of the excellent Agrippa; some of the noblest men of Rome were among her paramours; and she had at length become so devoid of shame and prudence as to carouse and revel openly at night in the Forum and even on the Rostra. Augustus had already had a suspicion that her mode of life was not quite correct; when now convinced of the full extent of her depravity, his anger knew no bounds. He communicated his domestic misfortune to the senate; he banished his dissolute daughter to the isle of Pandateria on the coast of Campania, whither she was accompanied by her mother Scribonia. He forbade her there the use of wine and of all delicacies in food or dress, and prohibited any person to visit her without his special permission. He caused a bill of divorce to be sent her in the name of her husband Tiberius,

of whose letters of intercession for her he took no heed. He constantly rejected all the solicitations of the people for her recall, and when one time they were extremely urgent he openly prayed that they might have wives and daughters like her*. At length, after a period of five years, he allowed her to remove to the town of Rhegium on the continent, and made her treatment somewhat milder.

Among the adulterers of Julia was Julius Antonius, the son of the triumvir by Fulvia†. Augustus had treated him with the greatest kindness; he had given him in marriage the daughter of his sister Octavia after her divorce from Agrippa, and had conferred on him all the honours and dignities of the state. His ingratitude was therefore without excuse, and he expiated his offence by a voluntary death‡. Of the rest, such as Sempronius Gracchus, Quinctus Crispinus, and Appius Claudius, some were executed and others banished.

It was in his family and his domestic relations that Augustus was destined to feel the adverse strokes of fortune. In 755 his grandson Lucius fell sick on his way to Spain, and died at Massalia; and eighteen months later (757) Caius breathed his last in Lycia, as he was on his return to Italy. Augustus had now only one grandson remaining, the posthumous child of Agrippa, of the same name with his father. He therefore adopted him and Tiberius on the same day, saying with regard to the latter, "This I do for the sake of the republic." He at the same time made Tiberius adopt Germanicus, the eldest son of his brother Drusus, although he had a son of his own by his first wife also named Drusus.

Tiberius was invested with the tribunician power for another period of five years, and was immediately despatched to assume the conduct of the German war, which had been going on for the last three years§. In his first campaign he passed the Weser, and having kept the field till the month of December, he placed his troops in winter-quarters at the head of the Lippe, and returned himself to Rome. In the following campaign (758), having received the submission of the Chaucans and broken the power of the Langobards, who were regarded

* Dion, iv. 10. Suet. Oct. 65. Sen. De Ben. vi. 32. Her freedwoman and confidante Phœbe having hung herself when the discovery was made, Augustus declared that he would sooner have been the father of Phœbe than of Julia.

† It was to him that Horace addressed the second ode of the 4th book of his Odes; probably in the year 739.

‡ Vell. Pat. iii. 100.

§ Ibid. ii. 104.

as the fiercest of the German tribes, he advanced to the banks of the Elbe; while his fleet, having safely circumnavigated the coast from the mouth of the Rhine to that of the Elbe, joined the land-army in this river and aided its operations.

The plan of the campaign for the ensuing year (759) was a very extensive one. The people named Marcomans had quitted their original seats and occupied the country named *Bohemum* (*Bohemia*), which lay in the heart of the great Hercynian forest. Their prince named Maroboduus, was one of those men of superior talent who have so often among barbarous tribes evinced the power of mental over corporeal qualities. He had established an undisputed authority over his own nation, and reduced all his neighbours to submission by arms or by persuasion. He maintained a disciplined army of 70,000 foot and 4000 horse; and as his southern frontier was little more than two hundred miles from the Alps, it was in his power suddenly to pour a large army even into Italy, and he was always ready to support revolt in the German or Illyrian provinces. Tiberius, a far-seeing statesman, resolved to anticipate the danger, and prepared to make a combined attack on the Marcoman prince. He therefore sent orders to C. Sentius Saturninus to invade Bohemia in the north from the country of the *Cattans*, while he himself should enter it from the south with the army of Illyricum, which he had assembled for the purpose at Carnuntum in Noricum.

But this extensive plan was frustrated by a formidable insurrection of the Dalmatians: for this people, who ill bore the weight of tribute imposed on them by the Romans, when they saw the troops that were in their country drawn away for the German war, and at the same time, in consequence of orders given them to prepare an auxiliary force, became aware of their own numbers and strength, at the impulsion of a chief named *Bato*, resolved to assert their independence. The *Breucans*, a Pannonian tribe, led by another *Bato*, joined them, and speedily all Pannonia shared in the revolt.

We should only weary the reader were we to enter into the details of this war, which lasted for the space of three years, employed fifteen legions and an equal number of auxiliaries, and was regarded as the most dangerous foreign war that had occurred since the days of Hannibal: for the seat of it was the *confine* of Italy; so that Augustus declared openly in the senate, that if proper measures were not adopted, the enemy might come within view of the city on the tenth day. The Panno-

nians were also remarkably familiar with the language, arts and knowledge of the Romans. The forces of the confederates were estimated at 200,000 foot and 9000 horse, under able and active leaders. In order to raise a force sufficient for the war, Augustus was obliged to call out all the veterans, to employ freedmen as soldiers, and to purchase for this purpose able-bodied slaves from their masters and mistresses. To add to his difficulties, Rome was at this time suffering severely from famine.

In the conduct of the war Tiberius certainly proved himself to be an able general, and his adopted son Germanicus, to whom Augustus had given a command, laid the foundation of his future fame. The success of the war was complete, the whole country from the Adriatic to the Danube, and from Noricum to Thrace and Macedonia, being reduced to complete submission (762)*.

This dangerous war was hardly brought to a close when intelligence arrived of a dreadful disaster which had befallen the Roman arms in Germany. Since the reduction of a part of the country beyond the Rhine, a military force had been maintained in it, and some forts were erected: the Germans were gradually adopting Roman manners, and accustoming themselves to Roman institutions. Had they been prudently managed they might have been civilised and made useful subjects; but the present commander in Germany, P. Quinctilius Varus, who had been governor of Syria and was therefore in the habit of meeting with a prompt obedience to all his commands, forgetting the difference between unwarlike Syrians and barbarous Germans, began to treat them with rigour, and to impose heavy taxes. Their native spirit was roused, and they secretly formed a plan for delivering themselves from the foreign yoke. Their principal leader was Arminius (*Hermann*) son of Sigimer, a Cheruscan prince who had long served with the Roman armies, and had obtained the freedom of the city and the equestrian rank. The plan adopted being to lull Varus into security, they made a show of yielding the most cheerful obedience to all his commands, and thus induced him to quit the Rhine, and advance toward the Weser. Sigimer and Arminius were continually with him; and so completely had they won his

* When Bato surrendered and appeared before the tribunal of Tiberius, the latter asked him why he had revolted. "Yourselves," replied he, "are the cause, for you send to your flocks, wolves, and not dogs or herdsmen." Dion, lv. 33; lvi. 16.

confidence, that when Segestes prince of the Cattans had given him information of the plot, and advised him to seize himself, Arminius and the other leaders, Varus refused to believe in it.

When all the necessary preparations had been made, some of the more distant tribes were directed to take up arms, in order that Varus might be attacked with more advantage when on his march to reduce them. Arminius and the others remained behind, under the pretext of raising troops with which they were to join him; and as soon as he was gone they fell on and slaughtered the various detachments which at their own particular desire he had stationed in their country; then collecting a large force, they followed and came up with the legions when in a place suited to their purpose.

The Roman army, consisting of three legions with their requisite cavalry and auxiliaries, in all upwards of 24,000 men, accompanied by women and children, by waggons and beasts of burden, was advancing without regular order as in a friendly country. They had reached a place surrounded by hills and covered with marshes, and with trees which they were obliged to cut down in order to effect a passage. The weather was tempestuous, and in the midst of the wind and rain, while they were floundering in the mire and impeded by the standing stumps and fallen trunks of the trees, they found themselves assailed on all sides by the Germans. After suffering much from their desultory assaults, they seized a dry spot where they encamped for the night, having burnt or abandoned the greater part of their baggage. Next day they attempted to march through the woods, but the wind and rain still continued, and the persevering enemy gave them no rest. At length Varus and his principal officers, seeing no chance of escape, rather than be taken or slain by the barbarians, terminated their lives with their own hands. The soldiers now lost all courage: some imitated the act of their officers, others ceased to resist and suffered themselves to be slain or taken; and had not the barbarians fallen to plunder, not a man had escaped captivity or death. The legate Numonius Vala* broke away with the greater part of the horse and made for the Rhine.

When intelligence of this calamity arrived at Rome, the consternation which prevailed was extreme. Since the days of Crassus no such misfortune had befallen the Roman arms.

* This is perhaps the son of the person to whom the fifteenth epistle of the 1st book of Horace's Epistles is addressed.

It was feared that the victorious Germans would invade Gaul, and even push on for Italy and Rome itself, and there was no army of either citizens or allies on foot to resist them. Augustus shared in the general alarm. He rent his raiment in grief; he vowed (what had only been done in the Cimbric and Marsic wars) great games to Jupiter Optimus Maximus if the state should return to a safer condition*; he doubled the guards in the city and prolonged the command of the governors of the provinces. Finding that none of the men of the military age came forward to enroll themselves, he made them cast lots; and of those under five-and-thirty every fifth, of those over that age every tenth man was to lose his property and to be infamous. Yet so degenerate were the Romans become, that even this severe measure failed to fill the ranks, and Augustus found it necessary to put some of them to death. He finally took the veterans by lot, and as many freedmen as he could collect, and having thus formed an army, he sent Tiberius in all haste with it to Germany. At the same time, he ordered all the Gauls and Germans at Rome to quit the city, and he removed his German guards to some of the islands off the coast lest they should revolt†. Tiberius led his army over the Rhine (763), but met with no enemies. In the following year he and Germanicus again appeared in Germany, but, as before, no opportunity was given for fighting. In 765 Tiberius, with the permission of Augustus, triumphed in the usual manner for the Pannonian war.

The domestic events of late years had not been numerous. Augustus still was doomed to suffer in his own family. His granddaughter Julia, whom he had married to L. Æmilius Paulus, imitated the profligacy of her mother, and he found it necessary to relegate her to an island off the coast of Apulia (762?‡). Her brother, the young Agrippa, proved of so violent and dangerous a temper, that Augustus, having at first renounced him and placed him in retirement at Surrentum, at length finding him growing worse every day, had him removed

* Any one acquainted with the character of Augustus will not easily believe, that according to the report (*ferunt*) mentioned by Suetonius (Oct. 23) and Dion (lvi. 23) he let his hair and beard grow for several months, and used to dash his head against the doors, crying, "Quintilius Varus, give back the legions." Augustus, we may observe, was at this time upwards of seventy years of age.

† He had had Spanish guards till after the battle of Actium: he then employed Germans. Suet. Oct. 49.

‡ See Tac. Ann. iv. 71; Masson, Vita Ovidii, a. 762.

to the isle of Planesia near Corsica, and a guard of soldiers set over him.

The life of Augustus still continued to be menaced by conspiracies. In 757 one was discovered, in which the person chiefly concerned was L. Cornelius Cinna, the grandson of Pompeius Magnus, and of the dictator Sulla. Augustus was long in doubt how to act, for experience had shown him that the execution of those engaged in one plot did not prevent the formation of another. He was finally induced by the arguments of his wife Livia to try the effects of lenity. He called the conspirators before him, and after remonstrating with them, pardoned and dismissed them, and he even made Cinna consul for the following year. The effect of such generosity on the minds of them and others was such, that no plots were formed against him during the remaining years of his life*.

The year after the triumph of Tiberius, Augustus received the supreme power for a fifth period of ten years. He then invested Tiberius anew with the tribunician power, and he took a census of the people for the third time. In the following year (767), having sent Germanicus to command in Germany, he proposed sending Tiberius to regulate the affairs of Illyricum, intending to dismiss him at Beneventum after they should have assisted at the gymnastic games, celebrated every fifth year in his honour by the people of Neapolis. He proceeded by land as far as Astura on the coast of Latium, and, contrary to his usual habit, he left that place in his litter by night for the sake of the cool air. He was in consequence attacked by a complaint in his bowels, but he did not heed it. He went on shipboard, and sailed leisurely along the coast of Campania. He spent four days in the isle of Capreae, passed then over to Neapolis and viewed the games. He thence proceeded to Beneventum, where he dismissed Tiberius, and then returned to Nola, growing every day worse and worse. Messengers were sent to recall Tiberius, with whom he is said to have held a long private conference, after which he spoke

* Dion, lv. 14-22; Seneca de Clem. i. 9. Suetonius (Oct. 19) mentions various persons who had conspired against Augustus, but without giving the dates of their attempts. Such were those of M. Egnatius Rufus (see Dion, liii. 24), of Plautius Rufus, and L. Paulus, of Asinius, and of Audasius a forger, Epicadus, a Parthian hybrid, and of Telephus, a slave. It was the plan of Audasius and Epicadus to release Julia and Agrippa, and take them to the armies, and to attack Augustus and the senate. It is possibly to one of these conspiracies that Ovid alludes, Met. i. 200 seq.

no more of public affairs*. On the day of his death he called for a mirror, and had his hair arranged and his cheeks plumped out. He asked those present if they thought that he had played his part well in the drama of life, adding the formula in which actors at the conclusion besought the applause of the audience†. He then dismissed them; and as he was inquiring of some who were just come from Rome after the health of one of Drusus' daughters who was sick, he breathed his last in the arms of Livia, saying, "Livia, live mindful of our marriage, and farewell!"‡ The chamber in which he expired, it may be observed, was that in which his father had died seventy-two years before.

Augustus died on the afternoon of the 19th of August, the day he had entered on his first consulate§. He wanted little more than a month of completing his seventy-sixth year. Computing from the battle of Actium, he had exercised the supreme authority in the Roman world for a space of forty-four years||. In person Augustus was below the middle size; his countenance was at all times remarkably serene and tranquil, and his eyes had a peculiar brilliancy. He was careless of his appearance, and plain and simple in his mode of living, using only the most ordinary food, and wearing no clothes but what were woven and made by his wife, sister, and daughters. In all his domestic relations he was kind and affectionate; he was a mild and indulgent master, and an attached and constant friend. He was fond of witnessing the sports of the Circus and other public shows, though it may be that he only sought thus to increase his popularity. He also took pleasure

* Vell. Pat. ii. 123; Suet. Oct. 98; Tib. 21. Dion (lvi. 31) says that the more general and credible account was that he died before the arrival of Tiberius, but that Livia kept his death secret. Tacitus (Ann. i. 5) leaves the matter uncertain.

† *Εἰ δὲ πᾶν ἔχει καλῶς, τῷ παιγνίῳ
Δότε κρότον, καὶ πάντες ὑμεῖς μετὰ χαρᾶς κτυπήσατε.*

‡ Livia was accused of poisoning him (Dion, lvi. 30; Tac. Ann. i. 5) by means of some fresh figs which he gathered with his own hand off the tree, but which she had previously anointed. This, by the way, was strange diet for a man with a bowel-complaint. The reason assigned is, that Augustus had some months before gone secretly to Planesia to see Agrippa. We consider charges of this nature to be entitled to little credit.

§ Tac. Ann. i. 9; Dion, lvi. 30.

|| Exactly 44 years minus 14 days. The reign of Augustus is also computed by some from the death of Cæsar in 710 = 57^y 5^m 4^d; by others from his first consulate in 711 = 56^y; or from the triumvirate in 712 = 55^y 8^m 23^d; or finally from his entrance into Alexandria in 724 = 43^y 10^d. See Clinton *ad* A.D. 14.

in playing at dice, but not for gain, as he did not exact his winnings. The heaviest charge made against him is his incontinence, but as we have above observed, this is evidently exaggerated.

In his public character, as the sovereign of the Roman empire, few princes will be found more deserving of praise than Augustus. He cannot be justly charged with a single cruel or even harsh action in the course of a period of forty-four years. On the contrary, he seems in every act to have had the welfare of the people at heart. In return, never was prince more entirely beloved by all orders of his subjects; and the title, Father of his Country, so spontaneously bestowed on him, is but one among many proofs of the sincerity of their affection.

Nothing, however, is more common with modern writers than to treat Augustus as a tyrant* who had destroyed liberty, and had raised his own power on the servitude of his country. But liberty had vanished from Rome long before his time, and surely no friend of mankind would prefer the preceding anarchy to the peace and tranquillity which he introduced and maintained. It was the evil destiny of Rome, not the fault of Augustus, that his successors did not resemble himself; it was necessity, not choice, that made him raise Tiberius to the second place in the state, and his evident desire that his own place should be filled by the noble Agrippa, vouches for his love of his country. In fine, we recognise in Augustus a man of consummate prudence†, and of a temperament naturally calm and moderate, raised by the force of circumstances to supreme power, and exercising it for the advantage of those over whom he ruled.

The Roman empire, as modeled by Augustus, presented the following appearance:

Augustus himself was at its head, but not in the manner of emperors and kings of ancient or modern times. He was

* Montesquieu (Considerations, &c. ch. 13) terms him a *rusé tyrant*. In a note he says that he uses the word *tyran* in its Greek and Latin sense, signifying one who had overturned a democracy. The employment of the term when thus explained is not very objectionable. Gibbon (ch. iii.) calls Augustus a *crafty tyrant*, without any limitation of the term.

† As a general too he was extremely cautious. The following maxims were constantly in his mouth: *Σπεῦδε βραδέως*, and *Ἀσφαλὴς γὰρ ἐστ' ἀμείνων ἢ θρασὺς στρατηλάτης*. Eur. Phœn. 608. A battle he said should never be fought unless the hope of advantage was visibly greater than the fear of loss. The contrary conduct he compared to that of a man who should angle with gold hooks. Suet. Oct. 25.

surrounded by no pomp, no guards attended him, no officers of the household were to be seen in his modest dwelling; he lived on terms of familiarity with his friends; he appeared like any other citizen as a witness in courts of justice, and in the senate gave his vote as an ordinary member. His power arose from the union in his person of all the high and important offices of the state. As High Pontiff he had the greatest authority in affairs of religion, and as Censor the right to regulate the morals of all orders of the people. By possessing the consular and proconsular power for life, he enjoyed the supreme authority, civil, judicial and military in all parts of the empire; and the tribunician power, with which he was also invested, being in its nature the constitutional check on that of the consuls, his authority was thus without legal control. His titles were First of the Senate (*Princeps Senatus**), which was his favourite one; Augustus and General (*Imperator*); that of Master (*Dominus*) when offered to him he always rejected with indignation. Caesar was merely his family name.

It may have been that Augustus saw the importance of a respectable aristocracy in a monarchy; but it is more probable, that he was under the influence of the love of conservation of ancient institutions, so strong in the character of every Roman. At all events, he knew that if a senate was to remain a part of the constitution, it was necessary that its members should possess both character and property. Hence, as we have seen, he often purged the senate†, and though he did not reduce it as low as he designed, he brought it down to little more than one half of its number at the time when he obtained the sole power, and he raised the qualification for a seat in the house to 1200 sester tia‡. He required the senators to meet only on the Kalends and Ides of each month, and he excused their attendance entirely in the sickly months of September and October, excepting a committee chosen by lot, in order to make the requisite decrees. To give greater

* Hence the modern term *prince*.

† In 725 (p. 4), in 735 (p. 10), in 741 (Dion, liv. 26), in 743 (*Id.* 45. 35), in 757 (*Id.* liv. 13). Perhaps this last was the occasion of the conspiracy of Cinna in that year. When selecting the senate in 736 he wore, it was said, his sword, and had a corselet under his tunic, and ten of the most able-bodied of his friends stood round his seat, and according to Cremutius Cordus no senator was admitted until he had been searched (Suet. 35). At this time many plots were said to be formed against him and Agrippa. Dion, liv. 15.

‡ Suet. Oct. 41.

solemnity to their acts, he directed that each member, before taking his place, should offer wine and incense on the altar of the deity in whose temple the senate sat. The first row of seats at every public show was ordered to be reserved for the senators. Their sons were also allowed to wear the *laticlave* or senatorian dress, and to be present at the sittings of the senate; and when they entered the army they were made at once, not merely tribunes of the legions, but colonels of horse (*præfecti alarum*). The senatorian order thus assumed the form of a body of nobility in the modern sense of the term; the senate formed a council of state, a high court of justice, and a legislative assembly, in some points resembling the British house of lords, in others the French chamber of peers. In order to give a share of the honours and emoluments of the state to as many of the two higher orders as possible, Augustus devised a great number of new offices; he increased the number of the prætors, and he introduced the practice of making *suffect* consuls, i. e. consuls in addition to the ordinary ones of the year*.

The populace at Rome, in consequence of the civil wars and of its degradation by the enfranchisement of numerous slaves, no longer bore a resemblance to the commonalty of the better days of the republic. It was factious and turbulent, and at the same time mean and servile. A body of disciplined troops was therefore always at hand to repress its excesses, and Augustus sought at the same time to keep it in good temper by gifts and entertainments. The greatest care was taken that the supply of corn from the provinces should be regular and abundant. In times of scarcity Augustus gave corn *gratis*, or at a very low price, to the people; he also frequently made distributions of money (*congiaria*) among them; and in the Forum, the Circus, the Amphitheatre, the Septa, and other public places, he entertained them with shows of all kinds. Sometimes they were assembled to witness the bloody combats of gladiators or the less cruel contests of wrestlers; at others they were amused with chariot- or foot-races, or the hunting and slaughter of wild beasts fetched from various parts of the empire—even the crocodiles of the Nile being brought to Rome to gratify the populace with the sight of their expiring agonies. On one occasion a large lake was dug in the Field of Mars for the exhibition of a naval combat. At the same

* This was afterwards carried to so great an extent, that, as we shall see, in the reign of Commodus there were 25 consuls in one year.

time, Augustus endeavoured to purify and elevate the character of the people of Rome, by throwing difficulties in the way of manumission, and by granting citizenship very sparingly to strangers*.

To adorn and improve the city was another great object with Augustus, and he effected so much by his own exertions and the co-operation of his friends, that when dying he could boast that he had found the city built of brick, and left it built of marble†. Thus he built (726) a temple of Apollo on the Palatine with a portico and a library, and a temple of Jupiter Tonans on the Capitol. He also made a new Forum with a temple in it of Mars Ultor. Others of his works bore the names of his wife and the other members of his family. Such were the portico of Livia and that of Octavia, the theatre of Marcellus, and the portico and basilica of Caius and Lucius. Tiberius rebuilt the temples of Concord and of Castor and Pollux; Marcius Philippus that of Hercules of the Muses; L. Munatius Plancus that of Saturn; L. Cornificius that of Diana; C. Asinius Pollio the Hall or Court (*Atrium*) of Liberty, while Cornelius Balbus built a theatre, and T. Statilius Taurus a magnificent amphitheatre. The works of Agrippa have been already enumerated.

To secure the city against inundations, Augustus cleared out and widened the bed of the Tiber. He first divided the city into wards or quarters (*regiones*) fourteen in number, and subdivided into streets (*vici*) with officers over them, chosen out of the inhabitants by lot. He established a body of watchmen and firemen to prevent the conflagrations which were so frequent. He caused all the great public roads to be repaired and kept in order. As the confusion and licence of the civil wars had, as is usually the case, given origin to illegal associations and to the formation of bands of robbers (*grassatores*), he took every care to suppress them. He therefore, as his uncle had done, dissolved all guilds but the ancient ones, and he disposed guards in proper stations for the prevention of highway robbery. He caused all the slave-houses (*ergastula*) throughout Italy to be visited and examined, it having been the practice to kidnap travellers, (freemen and slaves alike,) and shut them up and make them work in these prisons. In order to facilitate the administration of justice, he added upwards of thirty days to the ordinary court-days, and he increased the number of the decuries of jurors, and reduced the

* Suet. Oct. 40.

† *Id. ib.* 28. Dion, lvi. 30.

legal age of jurymen from five and twenty to twenty years. He himself sat constantly to hear causes and administer justice.

Every wise sovereign will be desirous to see a proper sense of religion prevalent among his subjects. Augustus accordingly turned his serious attention to this important subject. He rebuilt or repaired the temples which had been burnt or had fallen; he re-established and reformed various ancient institutions which had gone out of use, such as the Augury of Public Safety (*Salutis*), the office of Flamen Dialis, the secular games, the Lupercal rites, etc. He increased the number and the honours and privileges of the priesthoods, particularly that of the Vestal Virgins: he caused all the soothsaying books which were current, to the number of upwards of two thousand, to be collected and burnt, only retaining the Sibylline oracles, which he had carefully revised and placed in two cases under the statue of the Palatine Apollo. His efforts however remained without effect; infidelity and its constant concomitant, immorality, were spread too widely for him or any human legislator to be able to check them, and the polytheism of Greece and Rome was destined to fall before a far purer system of faith and doctrine.

We have already spoken of the exertions made by Augustus to overcome the prevalent aversion to marriage. The principal cause of this was the extreme dissoluteness of manners at the time, exceeding anything known in modern days; but poverty prevented many a man of noble birth from undertaking the charge of supporting a wife and family, and the court which was paid by greedy legacy-hunters to the rich and childless* had charms for many of both sexes. The promotion of marriage had always been an object of attention with the Roman government. One of the questions invariably put to each person by the censors was whether he was married or not, and there was a fine named *uxorium* laid on old bachelors. Cæsar the dictator had sought to encourage marriage by offering rewards; but the first law on the subject was the Julian *De maritandis ordinibus* of 736, and this having proved ineffectual, a new and more comprehensive law, embracing all the provisions of the Julian, and named the Papia-Poppæan (from the consuls M. Papius and Q. Poppæus), was passed in the year 762†.

* See Horace, Sat. ii. 5.

† See Dion, lvi. 1-10. He remarks that neither of the consuls had wife or child.

The principal heads of this law were : 1. All persons except senators might marry freedwomen. 2. No maiden was to be betrothed under the age of ten years. 3. Widows were allowed to remain single two years, divorced women a year and a half before contracting a second marriage. 4. Those who had children were to have various honours and advantages, such as better seats at the public spectacles, the preference when candidates for honours and in the allotment of the provinces, immunity from guardianship, and other personal burdens, etc. etc. 5. Bachelors could receive no legacies except from their nearest relations, and the childless only the half of what was left them. 6. A woman whose guilt was the cause of a divorce was to lose her dower.

The evil however was too deeply seated to be eradicated by law, and it still remained a subject of complaint. Of as little avail was the sumptuary law which he caused to be enacted; he even failed in his desire to bring the *toga* again into general use*.

Such were the principal civil regulations made during the reign of Augustus. The changes in the military system were also considerable.

In Rome, as in all the ancient republics, the army had been nothing more than a burgher militia, in which every freeman of the military age was required to serve when called on. The long foreign wars, however, in which Rome was afterwards engaged, gradually converted the original militia into a standing army, and war became a profession, as in modern times. The character of the soldier had also deteriorated since the change in the mode of enlistment made by C. Marius; and the Roman soldiery, further demoralised by the various civil wars, stood no higher in moral worth than the mercenary troops of modern Europe. The extent of the Roman empire, with warlike nations on its frontiers, could only be guarded by a regular standing army, disciplined and always in readiness to take the field. Accordingly, in the speech which Dion ascribes to Mæcenas, we find that statesman thus advising Augustus† : "The soldiers must be kept up, immortal, citi-

* The *lacerna*, a kind of military great coat of a dark colour and with a hood to it, was generally worn instead of the *toga*. Augustus one day seeing, as he sat on his tribunal in the Forum, a number of the people thus habited, cried out in indignation : "En

Romanos rerum dominos, gentemque togatam," and gave orders to the ædiles henceforth not to admit any one without a *toga* into the Forum or Circus.—Suet. Oct. 40.

† Dion, liii. 27.

zens, subjects, and allies, in some places more, in some less, through each nation as need may require, and be always in arms, and always engaged in military exercises; having their winter quarters in the most suitable places, and serving for a limited period, so as to have some part of their life to themselves before old age. For living so far away from the frontiers of the empire, and having enemies dwelling on every side of us, we could not have troops ready for any sudden emergency; but if we allow all who are of the suitable age to possess arms and to practise military exercises, they will be always raising factions and civil wars; and again, if we prohibit them to do so, and then call upon them to serve on any occasion, we shall run the risk of having none but raw and undisciplined troops. I therefore give it as my opinion that all the rest should live without arms or camps, while the most able-bodied and necessitous should be selected and disciplined: for these will fight the better having nothing else to occupy them; and the others can devote themselves more entirely to agriculture, navigation, and the other arts of peace, not being called on to serve personally and having others to protect them; and that portion of the population which is the strongest and most vigorous, and the most likely to live by robbery, will be supported at its ease, and all the rest will live free from danger."

It was therefore determined that the legions should be *immortal*, i. e. that the army should henceforth be a standing one. The legions were to be twenty-five in number, which we find thus stationed at the time of Augustus' death*:—On the Rhenish frontier eight; in Spain three; in Africa one; in Egypt two; in Syria four; in Pannonia three; in Mœsia two, and two more in Dalmatia for the protection of Italy. Attached to each of these divisions was a body of troops termed auxiliaries, furnished by the different states subject to, or in alliance with the empire, and, as in the old days of the republic, their number nearly equalled that of the legions†. The legion at this time contained 6100 infantry and 726 horse; the twenty-five legions, therefore, mustered when complete 170,000 men, to which, adding as many more for the auxiliaries, we have a sum total of 340,000 men. These, however, did not form the whole military force of the empire; there was a body of 10,000

* Dion, lv. 23; Tac. Ann. iv. 5. It is for the ninth year of Tiberius that this last furnishes us with the distribution of the legions given in the text, but there had been no alteration of any account since the time of Augustus.

† "Neque multo secus in iis virium." Tac. Ann. iv. 5.

guards, divided into nine cohorts, named Prætorian, and three Urban cohorts, containing 6000 men*. These two last bodies were always recruited in Etruria, Umbria, Latium, and the ancient Roman colonies. They had double pay, and their period of service was shorter than that of the legionaries. Augustus allowed only three of the cohorts to remain in the city, the rest were distributed through the towns in the vicinity†. There were two commanders of the Prætorian guards named prefects, who were always to be taken from the equestrian order. At Ravenna in the Upper, and Misenum in the Lower Sea, were stationed fleets of galleys, with their due complement of rowers, and each with its legion of marines attached to it; there also lay at Forum Julii (*Frejus*), on the coast of Gaul, a fleet composed of the ships taken at Actium‡.

The pay of the legionary soldier was ten *asses* a day, that of the prætorian was double; the former had to serve twenty, the latter sixteen years before he could claim his discharge. The former then received a gratuity of 3000, the latter of 5000 denars, answering to the pension of modern times.

The pay and rewards of so large an army, the salaries of the numerous public officers, and the other indispensable expenses of government, required a considerable revenue. From the time when Æmilius Paulus brought the treasures of Perseus to Rome the citizens had been free from the payment of the annual tributes or direct taxes hitherto levied, and so often in the early days of the republic the cause of seditions. An annual tribute was imposed on every conquered state, and as the tide of conquest rolled eastwards and westwards, a larger amount of revenue flowed annually to Rome. In the time of Augustus the annual tributes of Asia, Egypt, Africa, Spain, and Gaul, produced a sum which has been estimated at from fifteen to twenty millions sterling§. Yet even this large revenue did not suffice for the exigences of the state, and Augustus found it necessary not merely to continue the port-duties (*portoria*) or customs which had been imposed by the dictator, but to establish an excise and to lay on some direct taxes.

In all commercial states, at all ages of the world, duties have been levied on imported foreign commodities; they originated

* Tac. *ut suprâ*. Dion (lv. 24) says 10 Prætorian and 4 Urban cohorts.

† Suet. Oct. 49; the three would seem to be the Urban cohorts, thus confirming the numbers given by Tacitus.

‡ Tac. Ann. iv. 5; Suet. Oct. 49; Vegetius, v. 1. § Gibbon, i. ch. vi.

probably in the mistaken idea, that it was on the foreign merchant and not on the domestic consumer that they fell. They existed at Rome as elsewhere till the end of the Mithridatic war, when they were abolished; but Julius Cæsar caused them to be again collected*. They were levied *ad valorem* by Augustus, and varied from twelve and a half to two and a half per cent.; articles of luxury, such as the precious stones, silks and spices of the East, being, of course, the most highly taxed. The excise was imposed by Augustus chiefly with the view of providing a fund for the payment of the troops; it was a duty of one per cent. (*centesima*) levied on all articles, great and small, sold in the markets or by auction at Rome or throughout Italy. This not proving sufficient, he imposed (759) a duty of five per cent. on all legacies and inheritances, except in the case of the poor or of very near relations†. This equitable tax, however, proving very odious to the legacy-hunting nobility of Rome, in order to stop their murmurs he sent (766) to the senate, requesting them to suggest some less onerous imposition to the same amount; and when they could not, yet declared that they would pay anything rather than it, he substituted a property-tax, and sent out officers to make an estimate of the property in lands, houses, etc., throughout Italy. This brought them to reason, and there was no further opposition to the legacy-duty‡.

The treasury of the prince, whence the pay of the army was to issue, was named the Fisc (*Fiscus*), and was distinct from the public treasury (*Ærarium*), and managed by different officers; but the distinction was more apparent than real, as both were equally at the devotion of the master of the legions.

Such was the form of the Roman empire, as reduced into order, and regulated by the wisdom and prudence of Augustus. While the civilised world thus formed one body, governed by one mind, it pleased the Ruler of the Universe to send His Son into it, as the teacher of a religion unrivalled in sublimity, purity, and beneficence, and which was gradually to spread to the remotest ends of the earth. In the year of Rome 752 by the Catonian, 754 by the Varronian computation, Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judæa§.

* Cic. Att. ii. 16; Dion, xxxvii. 51; Suet. Jul. 43.

† Dion, lv. 25.

‡ Dion, lvi. 28.

§ We shall henceforth reckon by the Christian æra.

CHAPTER III.*

TIBERIUS CLAUDIUS NERO CÆSAR.

A.U. 767-790. A.D. 14-37.

Funeral of Augustus.—Mutiny of the Legions.—Victories of Germanicus.
 —His death.—Civil government of Tiberius.—Rise and fall of Sejanus.—
 Death of Agrippina and her children.—Death of Tiberius.

THE death of Augustus was kept a secret by Livia and Tiberius till the danger of a disputed succession should be removed by that of Agrippa Posthumus. Orders in the name of Augustus were therefore sent to the officer who had him in charge, to put him to death. The orders were forthwith executed; but when the centurion who was the agent made his report to Tiberius, according to the usual custom, the latter made answer that *he* had not ordered it, and that the centurion must account to the senate for what he had done. The matter, however, ended there, for no inquiry was ever instituted.

When the death of Augustus was at length made known at Rome, the senate, the knights, the army, and the people hastened to swear obedience to Tiberius, who had already assumed the command of the army as *Imperator*. The body of Augustus was conveyed by night from town to town by the *decurions* or councilmen of each. At Bovillæ it was met by the Roman knights, who carried it into the city, and deposited it in the vestibule of his house on the Palatine. Tiberius, by virtue of his tribunician authority, convoked the senate to consult about the funeral and the honours to be decreed to the deceased. These, had the real or pretended wishes of the senate prevailed, would have been excessive; but Tiberius set a limit to their adulation, and only consented that the senators should carry the body to the pyre. The will of Augustus, which was in the custody of the Vestals, was then produced and read. The funeral orations were pronounced by Tiberius himself and his son Drusus. The body was borne on the shoulders of the senate to the Campus Martius and there burnt; the ashes were collected by the principal men of the equestrian order, and deposited in the Mausoleum, which he had built in his sixth consulate (726), between the Flaminian road and the Tiber, and surrounded with plantations and public walks†. An eagle had been let to ascend from the flaming

* Authorities: Tacitus, Suetonius and Dion.

† See Virg. *Æn.* vi. 873. Its remains are near the Ripetta.

pyre, as the bearer of the soul of the deceased to heaven; and Numinius Atticus, a man of prætorian rank, swore publicly that he saw Augustus mounting to the skies, for which falsehood Livia gratified him with a gift of 25,000 denars. A *Heroum* was therefore decreed to be raised to Augustus, as to one who had not shared the fate of ordinary mortals, but, like Hercules or Romulus, was become a god.

By his last will, Augustus had made Tiberius and Livia (whom he had placed in the Julian family and named Augusta) his heirs, the former of two thirds, the latter of one third of the property which would remain after payment of the numerous legacies which he left. He bequeathed a sum of 43,500,000 sesterces to the Roman people; to the Prætorians 1000 sesterces each; half that sum to each of the Urbans, and 300 to each of the legionaries. He also bequeathed various sums to his friends. He expressly forbade either of the Julias to be laid in his monument when they died. Beside his will, Augustus left three pieces in writing, the one containing the directions about his funeral, another an account of his actions, which he directed to be cut on brazen tables, and set up before his Mausoleum, and a third giving a view of the condition of the whole empire, the number of soldiers under arms, the quantity of money in the treasury and fisc, or elsewhere, adding the names of the freedmen and slaves who might be called on to account for it.

The man into whose hands the supreme power was now transferred, was in character diametrically opposite to Augustus. Tiberius Claudius Nero, who was by adoption a member of the Julian house, was nearly fifty-four years of age. He had exercised all the principal offices in the state, and had commanded armies with reputation. He was fond of literature and science, and of the society of learned men; but he had all the innate haughtiness of the Claudian family; he was suspected of an inclination to cruelty, yet so profound was his power of dissimulation, that he had attained to that mature age without his character being generally understood*. His manners and carriage were repulsive and forbidding; he was habitually silent, and did not unbend and decline into familiarity.

When all due honours had been decreed to Augustus, the senate turned to Tiberius imploring him to assume the supreme power; but he feigned reluctance, spoke of the difficulty of

* In his first campaigns the soldiers, noticing his love of wine, called him Biberius Caldius Mero. Suet. Tib. 42.

the task and his own incompetence, saying that in a state possessing so many illustrious men, such power should not be committed to any single person. This only caused them to urge him the more; they called on the gods and on the statue of Augustus: Tiberius marked the words of each, and for some incautious speakers he laid up future vengeance. At length, yielding as it were to compulsion, he accepted the wretched and onerous servitude, as he termed it, until the senate should see fit to grant some repose to his old age.

In this affected reluctance, Tiberius no doubt was acting according to his natural character of dissimulation, and seeking to learn the real sentiments of the leading senators; but he had other reasons and causes of apprehension. He was uncertain how the two great armies, which were stationed in Pannonia and Germany, would act when they heard of the death of Augustus; and he feared lest Germanicus, who commanded the latter and who was universally beloved, might not choose to grasp the supreme power when within his reach, rather than wait for it to come to him by the more tedious course of succession. He did however the noble Germanicus injustice; but his suspicions of the legions were not unfounded, for they broke out into mutiny when intelligence reached them of the late events.

The mutiny commenced in the Pannonian army of three legions under the command of Junius Blæsus. The soldiers complained of the smallness of their pay and the length of their service, and demanded to be placed on an equality in both these points with the Prætorians. Blæsus having succeeded in some measure in calming them, they selected his own son as their deputy, to lay their grievances before Tiberius; but when he was gone the mutiny broke out anew, and they killed one of their officers, drove the rest out of the camp, and plundered their baggage. When Tiberius heard of the mutiny he sent off his son Drusus with a guard of the Prætorians, and bearing letters to the troops, in which he promised to lay their grievances before the senate, adding that Drusus was authorised to concede at once all that could be granted without a decree of the senate.

The soldiers received and listened to Drusus with respect; but when they found that he had not in fact the power to grant any of their demands, they quitted his tribunal in anger. The greatest apprehensions were entertained that they would break out into violence during the night; but an unexpected event

altered the whole course of affairs. The moon, which was shining at the full in an unclouded sky, was suddenly observed to grow dim. The ignorant, superstitious soldiers, viewing this as ominous of their own condition, clashed their arms and sounded their horns and trumpets, to relieve the labour of the goddess of the night; and as she still grew darker they gave way to despair, saying that the gods had declared against them, and that their toils were to have no end. The officers, who had influence with them, took advantage of this disposition, and went about all the night long reasoning with and persuading them. In the morning Drusus again addressed them, and Blæsus and two other deputies were sent to Tiberius. Meantime Drusus caused some of the most mutinous to be executed. A premature winter, with violent rain and storm, increased the superstitious terrors of the soldiery, and the legions gradually returned to their obedience without even waiting for the answer of Tiberius.

The mutiny which broke out at the same time in the German army was still more formidable. This army, consisting of two divisions of four legions each, was quartered in the Upper and Lower Germany; the former commanded by C. Silius, the latter by A. Cæcina. The commander-in-chief was Germanicus, who was at this time absent, being engaged in taking a census of Gaul. The mutiny commenced in the camp of Cæcina; the complaints were the same as those of the Pannonian legions, but the soldiers showed themselves more determined and ferocious. They seized their centurions, threw them on the ground, beat them nearly to death, and then cast them out of the camp or into the Rhine; they refused all obedience to their superior officers; they set the guards themselves, and performed all the necessary military duties.

Germanicus hastened to the camp; the soldiers came forth to meet him with all tokens of respect. He entered and ascended his tribunal; they stood round in their companies. He addressed them; they listened in silence while he spoke in praise of Augustus and Tiberius, and extolled their own exploits. But when he began to touch on their late conduct, they stripped their bodies, showing the scars of wounds and the marks of blows; they enumerated the laborious tasks they had to perform; the veterans counted up the thirty and more campaigns that they had served. Some called for the money bequeathed to them by Augustus, and expressed their wishes for Germanicus himself to assume the supreme power. At

these words he sprang down from the tribunal; they opposed his departure with menaces; he drew his sword and was about to plunge it into his bosom, but those near him caught his hand. Some of the more distant, however, called out to him to strike; and one soldier had the audacity to offer him his sword, saying that it was sharper than his own. The rest were appalled at this daring act, and paused; and his friends then got Germanicus into his tent. He there deliberated on the state of affairs; and as it was known that the mutineers were about to send deputies to solicit the legions in Upper Germany, and that the Germans would probably take advantage of the mutiny to cross the Rhine, it was resolved to try to appease them. A letter was therefore written in the name of Tiberius, giving a total discharge to those who had served twenty, and a partial one to those who had served sixteen campaigns; and adding that they should receive double the sum left them by Augustus. As two of the legions insisted on being paid their money down, Germanicus and his friends had to supply it from their own private funds.

Germanicus then proceeded to the army of Upper Germany, in which the spirit of mutiny had been very slight; and though the soldiers did not ask for them, he gave discharges and money as to the other army. On his return to the place named The Ubians' Altar (*Bonn*), where two of the lately mutinous legions were quartered, he met a deputation from the senate headed by Munatius Plancus. The soldiers, conscious of guilt, began to fear that they were the bearers of a decree annulling the concessions which they had extorted by their mutiny; they again broke into a tumult; they assailed the gate of Germanicus' dwelling in the night, and forced him to get up and deliver to them a standard which they demanded*. The deputies (especially Plancus, whom they fancied to have been the proposer of the obnoxious decree,) narrowly escaped with their lives. In the morning Germanicus remonstrated with them on their conduct, but they listened in sullen silence. He then dismissed the deputies with an escort of horse of the allies; and on his friends representing to him the imprudence of allowing his wife and young son to remain in a place of so much danger, he resolved to send them to the Trevirians for security.

* Tac. Ann. i. 39. Lipsius thinks it was the red flag which used to be hung out over the general's tent as the signal for battle.

Agrippina, the wife of Germanicus, was the daughter of Agrippa and Julia; she was a woman of a high spirit, devotedly attached to her husband, and of unsullied chastity, and she was now far advanced in pregnancy. Her young son Caius had been reared in the camp, and been given by the soldiers the name of Caligula, from his being made to wear the military shoes, which were so called. When, therefore, the soldiers saw the wife and child of their general, accompanied by the wives of his friends, all weeping and lamenting, about to quit a Roman camp in order to seek the protection of provincials, they were filled with grief and shame, and more especially with envy of the Trevirians. Some stopped them and insisted on their remaining, while others crowded round Germanicus, who now rebuked them severely for their conduct. They acknowledged their fault, besought him to punish the guilty, to forgive the misguided, to lead them against the enemy, but to bring back his wife and child, and not deliver the nursing of the legions as a hostage to Gauls. He consented to the return of his son, but excused that of his wife on account of her pregnancy and the approach of the winter. The soldiers were contented: they forthwith seized the ring-leaders of the mutiny, and dragged them bound before C. Cetronius, the legate of the first legion. They then stood with their swords drawn: each of the prisoners was placed on a bank of earth before the tribunal: if the soldiers cried out "Guilty," he was thrown down and they despatched him. Germanicus finally made an inquiry into the conduct of the centurions, and dismissed the service all who were proved guilty of avarice or cruelty.

Order being thus restored in these two legions, Germanicus made preparations for conducting a body of the allies against the other two legions who had begun the mutiny, and who were now lying at the Old Camp (*Vetera Castra*)*. He wrote however previously to Cæcina to say, that if not prevented by the punishment of the guilty, he would come and make a promiscuous slaughter. Cæcina secretly communicated this letter to the officers and the sound part of the army, and it was resolved to fall unawares on the mutineers, and slaughter them. The plan was carried into effect, and numbers were thus butchered. Germanicus, on coming to the camp, shed copious tears, calling it a massacre and not a medicine, and ordered

* Bûderich; see Kiessling on Tac. Ann. i. 45.

the bodies of the slain to be burnt. The soldiers clamoured to be led against the enemy, in order, by receiving honourable wounds, to appease the Manes of their comrades. A bridge was hastily thrown over the river, and they advanced some way into Germany, where, falling on the unsuspecting barbarians, on the night of one of their solemn festivals, they slaughtered all ages and sexes promiscuously; they laid the country waste for a space of fifty miles, leveling all edifices, sacred and profane alike; and Germanicus then led them back to winter quarters.

Tiberius received the account of the suppression of the mutiny with mingled feelings. He rejoiced that it was at an end, while he was uneasy at the popularity which Germanicus must have acquired by his able and vigorous conduct. He however praised him to the senate; but it was observed that his praises of Drusus, at the same time, though more brief, were more sincere. He gave the Pannonian legions all the advantages which Germanicus had granted to the German army.

Early in the spring (15) Germanicus led his whole army over the Rhine, and invaded the country of the Cattans, where he wasted the land and slaughtered the inhabitants in the usual manner. Segestes, the Cattan prince, who, as we have seen, through enmity to Arminius, was in favour of the Romans, having sent to apprise Germanicus that he was surrounded by his hostile countrymen, who were under the influence of Arminius, the Roman army was instantly marched to his relief, and he and his family, (among whom was his daughter, the wife of Arminius,) and a large body of his clients, were received under the protection of the Romans, and given a settlement on the left bank of the Rhine.

Germanicus led back his army; but Arminius, maddened at the captivity of his wife, went from place to place, rousing the Cherusicans and the conterminous tribes to arms against the Romans. He was joined by his uncle Inguiomer, a man whose talents the Romans held in the highest respect; and Germanicus therefore, judging that the war would be very serious, resolved to prevent if possible the whole weight of it from falling on one place. With this view he despatched Cæcina, with forty cohorts, through the Bructerian country to the river Ems (*Amisia*), while the prefect Pedo led the cavalry through the country of the Frisians; and he himself, putting four legions on shipboard, sailed through the lakes.

The whole force rendezvoused on the Ems, and all the country between it and the Lippe was laid waste.

As the Teutoburg forest, in which Varus and his legions had been slaughtered, was at hand, Germanicus resolved to proceed thither, and render the last honours to the slain. On arriving at the fatal spot the Romans found the camp of Varus bearing evidence of the fate of the army: around lay whitening the bones of men and horses; broken weapons strewed the ground; human heads were fixed on trunks of trees; the altars at which the officers had been sacrificed, stood in the adjoining woods. The soldiers mournfully collected the bones of their comrades, and raised a mound over them, Germanicus himself laying the first sod. The jealousy of Tiberius was offended at this popular act, which, he said, tended to damp the spirit of the soldiers.

The Romans, on their return to the Ems, were fallen on in their march through the woods and marshes by Arminius, and narrowly escaped a defeat. Germanicus then re-embarked his legions, sending the cavalry, as before, round the coast. He charged Cæcina to make all the speed he could, to get beyond the Long Bridges, as a causeway was named which the Romans had some years before constructed in the extensive marshes which lay not far from the Ems. Cæcina accordingly advanced with rapidity, but the speed of Arminius exceeded his; and on arriving at the Bridges he found the woods all occupied by the Germans. He also, to his mortification, saw that the causeway had become so decayed with time, that it must be repaired before the army could pass it; he therefore resolved to encamp on the spot.

The Germans assailed the Romans as they were engaged in forming their camp, and the legions were saved from destruction only by the intervention of night. As there was now little chance of their being able to pass by the Bridges, Cæcina saw that his only course was to endeavour to force his way through a narrow plain, which lay between the marshes and the hills occupied by the enemy. After passing a miserable night, the army set out at dawn; but the two legions, which were appointed to cover the flank of the line of march, disobeyed orders, and pushed on for the dry ground; and Arminius, waiting till he saw the Romans completely engaged in the marshes, charged the unprotected line and broke it. The horses were the chief object of attack; and, pierced by the long spears of the Germans, they fell and flung their

riders, or rushing on trampled on those before them : Cæcina's own horse was killed under him, and he was near being taken by the enemy. Fortunately for the Romans, the barbarians, in their usual manner, fell to plundering, and at the approach of evening, they succeeded in reaching the dry ground. Here they were obliged to encamp, but most of their implements were lost ; they were without tents, they had no dressings for their wounded, and their provisions were all spoiled ; they however succeeded in securing themselves for the night.

A horse having got loose in the night, the soldiers fancied that the Germans had broken into the camp, and they were preparing to fly for their lives ; when Cæcina, having ascertained that the alarm was groundless, called them together, and showed them that their only chance of safety was to remain within their ramparts till the enemy should assail them, and then to break out and push on for the Rhine. The horses, not excepting his own, were then given to the bravest men, who were to be the first to charge the enemy. The Germans, on their part, were also deliberating how to proceed ; Arminius was for letting the Romans quit their camp unmolested, and assailing as before their line of march ; but Inguomer insisted on storming the ramparts, as there would then be more captives made, and the plunder would be in better condition. His opinion prevailed, and a general assault was made at day-break. But while the Germans were scaling the ramparts, the signal was given to the cohorts ; the trumpets sounded, and the assailants found themselves attacked in the rear. They made but a feeble resistance ; they were slaughtered in heaps all through the day by the legionaries, who next morning pursued their march unmolested for the Rhine.

Germanicus resolved to conduct the next campaign (16) on different principles from the preceding ones. He had observed that in consequence of the nature of the country abounding in forests and morasses, the loss of men and horses in an invasion of Germany was immense ; whereas, if the infantry were conveyed thither by sea, and the horse led round the coast, the campaign might be begun earlier, and the troops be exposed to less toil and danger. He therefore caused a multitude of vessels of all descriptions to be built in various places, and appointed the isle of the Batavians as the place of rendezvous and embarkation. When all was ready he put the Roman army of eight legions and their attendant auxiliaries on board of a fleet of about one thousand vessels of all forms and

sizes, and sailing up the Rhine through the lake and along the coast of the ocean, entered the mouth of the Ems, where having landed his troops he advanced to the Weser. On reaching that river he found its opposite bank occupied by Arminius and the Cheruscan warriors. He however forced the passage, and the Germans having given him battle in a plain encompassed by hills on one side, on the other by the river, they were routed with great slaughter, the ground for a space of ten miles being covered with their arms and bodies. Undismayed by their reverses, they fell once more on the Romans as they were marching through a narrow marshy plain hemmed in by woods and the river; but success was once more on the side of discipline and superior arms, and Germanicus, in the inscription which he put on a pile of the armour of the vanquished Germans, could boast of having conquered all the nations between the Rhine and the Elbe. As the summer was now far advanced, he sent a part of his army to their winter-quarters by land; he himself embarked with the remainder in the Ems; but when they got into the open sea, they were assailed by a furious tempest: some of the vessels were driven on the German coast, others on the adjacent islands, others even to Britain, and the loss of horses and baggage was immense. When the storm was over, the ships which had escaped were repaired without delay, and sent to search the islands and bring off the men who had been cast away on them.

Germanicus and his officers were decidedly of opinion that one campaign more would end the war and complete the subjugation of Germany; but the jealousy of Tiberius would not let him permit Germanicus to remain longer at the head of so large an army, and he urged him to return to Rome to celebrate the triumph which had been decreed him, offering him as an inducement a second consulate. Germanicus, though he saw through his motives, yielded obedience to his wishes, and thus finally terminated the projects of the Romans for conquest in northern Germany*.

* The gallant Arminius afterwards engaged in war with and defeated Maroboduus. He finally perished by the treachery of his relations, being charged with aiming at royalty. Tacitus (ii. 88) gives him the following encomium: "*Liberator haud dubie Germaniæ, et qui non primordia Pop. Rom. sicut alii reges ducesque, sed florentissimum imperium lacessierit; preliis ambiguus, bello non victus; xxxvii. annos vitæ, xii. potentiæ explevit; canitur adhuc barbaras apud gentes; Græcorum annalibus ignotus, qui sua tantum mirantur; Romanis haud perinde celebris, dum vetera extollimus recentium incuriosi.*"

On his return to Rome (17), Germanicus celebrated his triumph over the Cattans, Cheruskans and Angivarians. Tiberius gave in his name a donation to the people of 300 sesterces a man, and nominated him his colleague in the consulate for the ensuing year. As about this time the kings of Cappadocia, Commagene and Cilicia were dead, and the affairs of Armenia were in their usual disorder, and Syria and Judæa were applying for a diminution of their burdens, Tiberius, who did not wish to let Germanicus remain at Rome, or who, as some suspected, had designs on him which could best be accomplished at a distance, took advantage of this occasion for removing him; by a decree of the senate he was therefore assigned the provinces beyond the sea, with an authority when in any of them paramount to that of its actual governor. Tiberius at the same time removed Silanus, the governor of Syria, whose daughter was affianced to Germanicus' son, and appointed in his place Cn. Piso, a man of a fierce and violent temper, and whose wife Plancina, a haughty and arrogant woman, was the intimate friend of Livia. It was suspected that they were selected as fit agents for the execution of some secret design against Germanicus.

After visiting his brother Drusus, who held the command in Illyricum, and with whom he was always on the most cordial terms, Germanicus proceeded to Greece (18), whence he passed over to Asia, where he invested Zeno, son of the king of Pontus, with the diadem, and reduced Commagene and Cappadocia to the form of provinces. He thence (19) proceeded to Egypt, urged chiefly by the laudable curiosity of viewing the wonders of that land of mystery. On his return to Syria he fell sick, and it was suspected that the cause of his disease was poison, privily administered by Piso and Plancina, with whom he was now at open enmity: Germanicus himself was of this opinion, and he therefore sent Piso orders to quit the province. The disease however proved fatal, and he died shortly after, with his last breath charging his friends to appeal to his father, brother, and the senate for punishment on Piso and Plancina, as the authors of his death.

Such was the end of the noble Germanicus in the thirty-fourth year of his age. Unlike the Claudian family, from which he sprang, he was mild, affable, and clement in temper. Not content with military glory, he sought fame also in the peaceful fields of literature*. He was a faithful

* His translation of Aratus' *Phænomena* still remains; Ovid dedicated to him his revised *Fasti*: see our edition of that poem.

husband, an affectionate parent, a constant friend ; in fine, both in public and private virtues he has few superiors in the pages of history.

After the death of Germanicus a consultation was held, by such of the senators as were present, on the subject of the government of the province of Syria now vacant, and it was resolved to commit it to Cn. Sentius. Meantime Piso, who was at C s when the news of the death of Germanicus reached him, consulted as to what *he* should do. His son urged him to pursue his journey to Rome without a moment's delay ; but one of his friends, Domitius Celer, advised him to return to Syria, and wrest the government of it from Sentius. Piso adopted this last course ; but failing in his attempts to seduce the legions, he was besieged by Sentius in a castle on the coast of Cilicia, and surrendered on condition of being allowed to proceed to Rome.

Agrippina had already (20) reached that city with the urn which contained the ashes of her illustrious husband. The mourning of the people was universal and sincere, but the honours of the dead were limited by the jealousy of Tiberius. When Drusus, after the funeral, returned to Dalmatia, he was visited by Piso, who hoped to gain his protection ; but failing in his object he had to proceed to Rome, where the friends of Germanicus made no delay in exhibiting articles of accusation against him. The cause was referred by Tiberius to the senate. All the charges but that of poisoning were proved ; and Piso seeing Tiberius, the senate and the people equally hostile to him, sought a refuge from ignominy in a voluntary death. Plancina was acquitted through the influence of Augusta, at whose desire Tiberius himself became her intercessor.

Before we proceed to notice the internal affairs of the empire during the early part of the reign of Tiberius, we will mention briefly the slight military movements on the frontiers.

In Africa a Numidian named Tacfarinas, who had served in the Roman army, and had then become a freebooter and gradually collected a good body of men, being joined by a Moorish chief named Mazippa, began to lay waste and plunder the province (17). The proconsul Furius Camillus led the Roman troops out against them ; Tacfarinas had the courage to give him battle, but his Numidians were easily routed ; the triumphal insignia were decreed to Camillus, who, as the historian observes, was the first of his family, since the time of the great Camillus and his son, who had ac-

quired military glory. Tacfarinas continued to harass the province by his incursions for some years; at length (24) he was defeated and slain by the proconsul P. Dolabella.

The trifling commotions which took place in Thrace, and were easily repressed, are not deserving of particular notice; but an insurrection which broke out in Gaul (21) threatened to be of serious consequence. The origin of it was the heavy weight of debt caused by the excessive amount of the tributes, to meet which the states were obliged to borrow money from the wealthy men at Rome on enormous interest; to which was added the pride and severity of the Roman governors. The heads of the revolt were Julius Florus a Trevirian, and Julius Sacrovir an Æduan, both men of great influence, and whose ancestors had been honoured with the Roman right of citizenship. The people of Anjou and Touraine were the first to rise, but they were easily put down; Sacrovir, who had not yet declared himself, fighting on the occasion in the Roman ranks. Florus, with his Trevirians, occupied the forest of Ardenne (*Arduenna*); but his unorganised rabble was easily dispersed by a party under Julius Indus, another Trevirian who was at enmity with him, and he slew himself to escape captivity. Sacrovir meantime seized on Autun (*Augustodunum*), the capital of the Æduans, where most of the young nobility of Gaul were placed for the purpose of education, in order that he might thus draw their parents and relations in to share in the war. He collected forty thousand men, only a fifth of whom were completely armed; with these he gave battle to the Roman legions, and being defeated he fled with a few companions to a country-house near Autun, where he put an end to himself. The Gallic war was thus terminated, and the empire remained at peace during the remainder of the reign of Tiberius.

It is now time that we should trace the conduct of this wily prince during the period of which we have related the military transactions.

All the historians are agreed that he both disliked and feared Germanicus, and that it was the awe in which he stood of that favourite of the soldiery and the people that caused him to act with so much moderation in his first years, in which there is really little to reprehend.

His plan was to possess the reality of power without exciting hatred or envy by the useless display of the show of it. He therefore rejected the titles that were offered him,

such as that of Imperator, as a *prænomen*, and that of Father of his Country ; even that of Augustus, though hereditary, he would only use in his letters to kings and dynasts : above all he rejected that of Master (*Dominus*) ; he would only be called Cæsar, or First of the Senate. This last (which we shall henceforth term Prince) was his favourite title : he used to say, "I am the Master of my slaves, the General of the soldiers, and the Prince of the rest." He would not allow anything peculiar to be done in honour of his birthday, nor suffer any one to swear by his fortune ; neither would he permit the senate to swear to his acts on a new year's day, or temples, or any other divine honours, to be decreed him. He was affable and easy of approach ; he took no notice of libels and evil reports of which he was the object, while he repelled flattery of every kind.

To the senate and the magistrates he preserved (at least in appearance) all their pristine dignity and power. Every matter, great or small, public or private, was laid before the senate. The debates were apparently free, and the prince was often in the minority. He always entered the senate-house without any attendants, like an ordinary senator ; he reproved consuls in the command of armies for writing to him instead of the senate ; he treated the consuls with the utmost respect, rising to them and making way for them. Ambassadors and deputies were directed to apply to them as in the time of the republic. It was only by his tribunician right of interceding that he exercised his power in the senate. He used also to take his seat with the magistrates as they were administering justice, and by his presence and authority gave a check to the influence of the great in protecting the accused ; by which conduct of his, while justice gained, liberty, it was observed, suffered*.

The public morals and the tranquillity of the city were also attended to. A limit was set to the expenses of plays and public shows, and to the salaries of the players, to whom the senators and knights were forbidden to show marks of respect, by visiting them or attending them in public. Profligacy had become so bold and shameless, that ladies were known to have entered themselves in the list of professed courtezans in order to escape the penalties of the law, and young men of family to have voluntarily submitted to the mark of infamy in order to

* "Sed dum veritati consulitur libertas corrumpebatur." Tac. Ann. i. 75.

appear with safety on the stage or the *arena*: both these infamous classes were now subjected to the penalty of exile. Astrologers and fortune-tellers were expelled the city; the rites and ceremonies of the Egyptian and Judaic religions were suppressed. Guards were placed throughout Italy to prevent highway robbery; and those refuges of villany of all kinds, the sanctuaries, were regulated in Greece and Asia.

Yet people were not deceived by all this apparent regard for liberty and justice; for they saw, as they thought, from the very commencement, the germs of tyranny, especially in the renewal of the law of treason (*majestas*)*. In the time of the republic there was a law under this name, by which any one who had diminished the greatness (*majestas*) of the Roman people by betraying an army, exciting the plebs to sedition, or acting wrong in command, was subject to punishment. It applied to actions alone; but Sulla extended it to speeches†, and Augustus to writings against not merely the state, but private individuals, on the occasion of Cassius Severus having libelled several illustrious persons of both sexes. Tiberius, who was angered by anonymous verses made on himself, directed the prætor, when consulted by him on the subject, to give judgement on the law of treason. As this law extended to words as well as actions, it opened a wide field for mischief, and gave birth to the vile brood of Delators or public informers answering to the sycophants, those pests of Athens in the days of her democratic despotism. This evil commenced almost with the reign of Tiberius, in whose second year two knights, Falonius and Rubrius, were accused, the one of associating a player of infamous character with the worshipers of Augustus, and of having sold with his gardens a statue of that prince, the other of having sworn falsely by his divinity. Tiberius however would not allow these absurd charges to be entertained. Soon after Granius Marcellus, the prætor of Bithynia, was charged with treason by his quæstor, Cæpio Crispinus, for having spoken evil of Tiberius, having placed his own statue on a higher site than those of the Cæsars, and having cut the head of Augustus off a statue to make room for that of Tiberius. This last charge exasperated Tiberius, who declared that he would himself vote on the matter; but a bold expression used by Cn. Piso brought him to reason, and Marcellus was acquitted.

* Tac. Ann. i. 72.

† Cic. ad Fam. iii. 11.

After the death of Germanicus, Tiberius acted with less restraint; for his son Drusus did not possess the qualities suited to gain popularity, and thus to control him. In fact, except his affection for his noble adoptive brother, there was nothing in the character of Drusus to esteem. He was addicted to intemperance, devoted to the sports of the amphitheatre, and of so cruel a temper, that a peculiarly sharp kind of swords were named from him Drusians. Tiberius made him his colleague in the consulate*, and then obtained for him the tribunician power (22); but Drusus was fated to no long enjoyment of the dignity and power thus conferred on him. A fatal change was also to take place in the conduct and government of Tiberius himself, of which we must now trace the origin.

Seius Strabo, who had been made one of the præfects of the prætorian cohorts by Augustus, had a son, who, having been adopted by one of the Ælian family, was named in the usual manner L. Ælius Sejanus. This young man, who was born at Vulsinii in Tuscany, was at first attached to the service of Caius Cæsar, after whose death he devoted himself to Tiberius; and such was his consummate art, that this wily prince, dark and mysterious to all others, was open and unreserved to him. Sejanus equalled his master in the power of concealing his thoughts and designs; he was daring and ambitious, and he possessed the requisite qualities for attaining the eminence to which he aspired; for though proud he could play the flatterer; he could and did assume a modest exterior, and he had vigilance and industry, and a body capable of enduring any fatigue.

When Drusus was sent to quell the mutiny of the Pannonian legions, Sejanus, whom Tiberius had made colleague with his father Strabo in the command of the prætorians, accompanied him as his governor and director. Strabo was afterwards sent out to Egypt, and Sejanus was continued in the sole command of the guards; he then represented to Tiberius how much better it would be to have them collected into one camp instead of being dispersed through the city and towns, as they would be less liable to be corrupted, would be more orderly, and of greater efficiency if any insurrection should occur. A fortified camp was therefore formed for them

* Dion (lvii. 20) says that people forthwith prophesied the ruin of Drusus; for it was observed that every one who had been Tiberius' colleague in the consulate came to a violent end, as Quinctilius Varus, Cn. Piso, Germanicus, and afterwards Drusus and Sejanus.

near the Viminal gate, and Sejanus then began to court the men, and he appointed those on whom he could rely to be tribunes and centurions. While thus securing the guards, he was equally assiduous to gain partisans in the senate, and honours and provinces only came to those who had acquired his favour by obsequiousness. In all these projects he was unwittingly aided by Tiberius, who used publicly to style him "the associate of his labours," and even allowed his statues to be placed and worshiped in temples and theatres, and among the ensigns of the legions.

Sejanus had in fact formed the daring project of destroying Tiberius and his family, and seizing the supreme power. As beside Tiberius and Drusus, who had two sons, there were a brother and three sons of Germanicus living, he resolved, as the safer course, to remove them gradually by art and treachery. He began with Drusus, against whom he had a personal spite, as that violent youth had one time publicly given him a blow in the face. In order to effect his purpose, he seduced his wife Livia or Livilla, the sister of Germanicus; and then, by holding out to her the prospect of a share in the imperial power, he induced her to engage in the plan for the murder of her husband*. Her physician Eudemus was also taken into the plot, but it was some time before the associates could finally determine what mode to adopt. At length a slow poison was fixed on, which was administered to Drusus by a eunuch named Lygdus, and he died apparently of disease (23). Tiberius, who while his son was lying dead, had entered the senate-house and addressed the members with his usual composure, pronounced the funeral-oration himself, and then turned to business for consolation.

So far all had succeeded with Sejanus, and death carried off the younger son of Drusus soon after his father; but Nero and Drusus, the two elder sons of Germanicus, were now growing up, and the chastity of their mother and the fidelity of those about them put poison out of the question. He therefore adopted another course; and taking advantage of the high spirit of Agrippina, and working on the jealousy of her which Augusta was known to entertain, he managed so that both she and Livilla should labour to prejudice Tiberius against Agrippina by talking of the pride which she took in her progeny, and the ambitious designs which she entertained.

* "Neque femina, amissa pudicitia, alia abauexit," observes Tacitus.

At the same time he induced some of those about her to stimulate her haughty spirit by their treacherous language. He further proposed to deprive her of support by destroying those persons of influence who were attached to her family, or the memory of her husband. With this view he selected for his first victims C. Silius and Titius Sabinus, the friends of Germanicus, and Silius' wife, Sosia Galla, to whom Agrippina was strongly attached, and who was therefore an object of dislike to Tiberius. Omitting however Sabinus for the present, he caused the consul Visellius Varro to accuse Silius of treason for having dissembled his knowledge of the designs of Sacrovir, having disgraced his victory by his avarice, and countenanced the acts of his wife. Having asked in vain for a delay till his accuser should go out of office, and seeing that Tiberius was determinedly hostile to him*, Silius avoided a condemnation by a voluntary death. His wife was banished; a portion of his property was confiscated, but the remainder was left to his children.

Urged by his own ambition, and by the importunity of Livilla, Sejanus had soon (25) the boldness to present a petition to Tiberius, praying to be chosen by him for her husband. Tiberius took no offence; his reply was kind, only stating the difficulties of the matter with respect to Sejanus himself, but at the same time expressing the warmest friendship for and confidence in him. Sejanus however was suspicious, and he began to reflect that while Tiberius remained at Rome, many occasions might present themselves to those who desired to undermine him in the mind of that jealous prince; whereas, could he induce him to quit the city, all access to him would be only through himself, all letters would be conveyed by soldiers who were under his orders, and gradually, as the prince advanced in years, all the affairs of the state would pass into his hands. He therefore, by contrasting the noise and turbulence of Rome with the solitude and tranquillity of the country, gradually sought to bend him to his purpose, which he effected in the following year.

During this time the deadly charge of treason was brought

* "Adversatus est Cæsar, solitum quippe magistratibus diem privatis dicere; nec infringendum consulis jus, cujus vigiliis niteretur ne quod respublica detrimentum caperet. Proprium id Tiberio fuit scelera nuper reperta prisca verbis obtegere." Tac.

against various persons. The most remarkable case was that of A. Cremutius Cordus, the historian. He had made a free remark on the conduct of Sejanus, and accordingly two of that favourite's clients were directed to accuse him of treason, for having in his history called Cassius the last of the Romans*. Cremutius, when before the senate, observing the sternness of Tiberius' countenance, took at once the resolution of abandoning life, and therefore spoke as follows :—

"Fathers, my words are accused, so guiltless am I of acts; but not even these are against the prince or the prince's parent, whom the law of treason embraces. I am said to have praised Brutus and Cassius, whose deeds, while several have written, no one has mentioned without honour. Titus Livius, who is preeminent for eloquence and fidelity, extolled Pompeius with such praises, that Augustus used to call him a Pompeian; nor was that any hindrance of their friendship. He nowhere calls Scipio, Afranius, this very Cassius, this Brutus, brigands and parricides, which names are now given them; he often speaks of them as distinguished men. The writings of Asinius Pollio transmit an illustrious record of them; Messala Corvinus used to call Cassius his general; and both of them flourished in wealth and honours. To the book of Marcus Cicero, which extolled Cato to the skies, what did the dictator Cæsar but reply in a written speech as if before judges? The letters of Antonius, the speeches of Brutus, contain imputations on Augustus which are false, and written with great bitterness. The verses of Bibaculus and Catullus, which are full of abuse of the Cæsars, are read; nay, the divine Julius himself, the divine Augustus himself, both bore with them and let them remain; I cannot well say whether more through moderation or wisdom: for what are despised go out of mind; if you are angry with them their truth seems to be acknowledged. I speak not of the Greeks, among whom not only liberty but licence was unpunished; or if any one *did* take notice, he avenged himself on words by words. But there was the greatest freedom, and no reproach, when speaking of those whom death had removed from enmity or favour. Do I, in the cause of civil war, inflame the people by my harangues while Brutus and Cassius are in arms, and occupying the plains of Philippi? Or do

* He probably only used the words of Brutus, who spoke thus of Cassius. See Hist. of Rome, p. 470.

they, who are now dead these seventy years, as they are known by their images, which the conqueror did not destroy, retain in like manner their share of memory in literary works? Posterity allots his meed to every one; nor, should a condemnation fall on me, will there be wanting those who will remember not only Brutus and Cassius, but also me."

Having thus spoken, Cordus left the senate-house, and returning to his own abode starved himself to death. The senate decreed that the copies of his work should be collected and burnt by the ædiles; but some were saved by his daughter Marcia, and were republished in the succeeding reign*.

At length (26) Tiberius quitted Rome and went into Campania, under the pretext of dedicating a temple to Jupiter at Capua, and one to Augustus at Nola; but with the secret intention of never returning to the city. Various causes, all perhaps true, are assigned for this resolution. The suggestions of Sejanus were not without effect; he was grown thin, and stooped; he was quite bald, and his face was full of blotches and ulcers, to which he was obliged to have plasters constantly applied; and he may therefore have sought, on this account, to retire from the public view. It is further said that he wished to escape from the authority of his mother, who seemed to consider herself entitled to share the power which he had obtained through her exertions; but perhaps the most prevalent motive was the wish to be able to give free course to his innate cruelty and lusts when in solitude and secrecy.

He was accompanied only by one senator, Cocceius Nerva, who was deeply skilled in the laws, by Sejanus and another knight, and by some persons, chiefly Greeks, who were versed in literature. A few days after he set out an accident occurred, which was near being fatal to him, but proved fortunate for Sejanus. As at one of his country-seats near Fundi, named the Caverns (*Speluncæ*), he was, for the sake of the coolness, dining in one of the natural caverns, whence the villa derived its appellation, a great quantity of the

* See Sen. Cons. ad Marciam; Suet. Cal. 16. "Quo magis socordiam [i.e. vecordiam] eorum inridere licet," observes Tacitus, "qui præsentia credunt extingui posse etiam sequentis ævi memoriam; nam contra, punitis ingeniis gliscit auctoritas; neque aliud externi reges, aut qui eadem sævitia usi sunt, nisi dedecus sibi atque illis gloriam peperere."

stones, which formed its roof, fell down and crushed some of the attendants to death. Sejanus threw himself over Tiberius to protect him with his own body, and was found in that position by the soldiers who came to their relief. This apparent proof of generous self-devotion raised him higher than ever in the estimation of the prince.

While Tiberius was rambling from place to place in Campania (27), a dreadful calamity occurred at Fidenæ, in consequence of the fall of a temporary amphitheatre erected by a freedman named Atilius for giving a show of gladiators; the number of the killed and maimed is said to have been fifty thousand. The conduct of the nobility at Rome on this melancholy occasion showed that all virtue had not departed from them; they threw open their houses for the sufferers, and supplied them with medical attendance and remedies; so that, as the great historian observes, the city wore the appearance of the Rome of the olden time, when after battles the wounded were thus humanely treated. This calamity was immediately followed by a tremendous fire on the Cælian hill; but Tiberius alleviated the evil by giving the inhabitants the amount of their losses in money.

Having dedicated the temples, and rambled for some time through the towns of Campania, Tiberius finally fixed on the islet of Capræ in the bay of Naples as his permanent abode. This isle, which lay at the short distance of three miles from the promontory of Surrentum, was accessible only in one place; it enjoyed a mild temperature, and commanded a most magnificent view of the bay of Naples and the lovely region which encompassed it*. But the delicious retreat was speedily converted by the aged prince into a den of infamy, such as has never perhaps found its equal; his vicious practices, however, were covered by the veil of secrecy, for he still lay under some restraint.

When Tiberius left Rome, Sejanus renewed his machinations against Agrippina and her children and friends. He directed his first efforts against her eldest son Nero, whom he surrounded with spies; and as this youth was married to a daughter of Livilla's, his wife was instructed by her abandoned mother to note and report all his most secret words and actions. Sejanus kept a faithful register of all he could learn

* Augustus was so taken with the charms of this island, that he gave lands in exchange for it to the people of Naples to whom it belonged. Dion, lii. 43. Strabo, v. p. 248.

in these various ways, and regularly transmitted it to Tiberius. He also drew to his side Nero's younger brother Drusus, a youth of a fiery turbulent temper, and who hated him because he was his mother's favourite. It was however Sejanus' intention to destroy him also when he should have served his purpose against Nero.

At this time also he made his final and fatal attack on Titius Sabinus, whose crime was his attachment to the family of Germanicus. The bait of the consulate, of which Sejanus alone could dispose, induced four men of prætorian dignity to conspire his ruin. The plan proposed was that one of them, named Latinus Latiaris, who had some knowledge of Sabinus, should draw him into conversation, out of which a charge of treason might be manufactured. The plot succeeded: Latiaris, by praising the constancy of Sabinus in friendship, led him gradually on to speak as he thought of Sejanus, and even of Tiberius. At length, under pretence of having something of great importance to reveal, he brought him into a chamber where the other three were concealed between the ceiling and the roof. A charge of treason was therefore speedily concocted and forwarded to Tiberius, from whom a letter came on New Year's day (28), plainly intimating to the senate his desire of vengeance. This sufficed for that obsequious body, and Sabinus was dragged forth and executed without delay.

In his letter of thanks to the senate, Tiberius talked of the danger he was in, and of the plots of his enemies, evidently alluding to Agrippina and Nero. These unfortunate persons lost their only remaining refuge the following year (29) by the death of the prince's mother, Julia Augusta*, whose influence over her son, and regard for her own descendants, had held Sejanus in restraint. This soon appeared by the arrival of a letter from Tiberius, accusing Nero of unnatural practices, and speaking of the arrogance of Agrippina; but while the senate were in debate, the people surrounded the house, carrying the images of Agrippina and Nero, and crying out that the letter was forged, and the prince deceived. Nothing therefore was done on that day, and Sejanus took the opportunity of irritating the mind of Tiberius, who wrote again to the senate; but as in the letter he forbade their proceeding to extremes, they passed

* Writers differ as to her age. Tacitus merely says *extrema ætate*. Pliny (xiv. 8.) makes her 82, Dion (lviii. 1.) 86 years old. This last seems to be the more correct, as her son Tiberius was now 70 years of age.

a decree, declaring themselves prepared to avenge the prince, were they not hindered by himself.

Most unfortunately the admirable narrative of Tacitus fails us at this point; and for the space of more than two years, and those the most important of the reign of Tiberius, we are obliged to derive our knowledge of events from the far inferior notices of Dion Cassius and Suetonius. We are therefore unable to display the arts by which Sejanus effected the ruin of Agrippina and her children, and can only learn that *she* was relegated to the isle of Pandateria, where, while she gave vent to her indignation, her eye was struck out by a centurion; and that Nero was placed in the isle of Pontia, and forced to terminate his own life. The further fate of Agrippina and Drusus we shall have to relate.

Sejanus now revelled in the enjoyment of power; every one feared him, every one courted and flattered him. "In a word," says Dion, "*he* seemed to be emperor, Tiberius merely the ruler of an island*;" for while the latter dwelt in solitude and apparently unthought of, the doors of the former were thronged every morning with saluting crowds, and the first men of Rome attended him on his way to the senate. His pride and insolence, as is always the case with those who rise otherwise than by merit, kept pace with his power, and men hated while they feared and flattered him.

He had thus ruled for more than three years at Rome with power nearly absolute, when (31) Tiberius made him his colleague in the consulate—an honour observed to be fatal to every one who had enjoyed it. In fact the jealous tyrant, who had been fully informed of all his actions and designs†, had secretly resolved on his death; but fear, on account of Sejanus' influence with the guards, and his uncertainty of how the people might stand affected, prevented him from proceeding openly against him. He therefore had recourse to artifice, in which he so much delighted. At one time he would write to the senate, and describe himself as so ill that his recovery was nearly hopeless; again that he was in perfect health, and was about to return to Rome. He would now praise Sejanus to the skies, and then speak most disparagingly of him; he would honour some and disgrace others of

* *Νησιάρχον τινα εἶναι δοκεῖν.*

† According to Josephus (Antiq. xviii. 6.), Antonia, the widow of his brother Drusus, wrote him a full account of Sejanus' proceedings, and sent it by a trusty slave named Pallas, a person afterwards, as we shall see, of some importance.

his friends solely as such. In this way both Sejanus himself and all others were kept in a state of the utmost uncertainty. Tiberius further bestowed priesthoods on Sejanus and his son, and proposed to marry his daughter to Drusus, the son of Claudius, the brother of Germanicus; yet at the same time, when Sejanus asked permission to go to Campania, on the pretext of the future bride being unwell, he desired him to remain where he was, as he himself would be coming to Rome immediately.

All this tended to keep Sejanus in a state of great perturbation; and this was increased by the circumstance of Tiberius, when appointing the young Caius to a priesthood, having not merely praised him, but spoken of him in some sort as his successor in the monarchy. He would have proceeded at once to action, were it not that the joy manifested by the people on this occasion proved to him that he had only the soldiers to rely on, and he hesitated to act with them alone. Tiberius then showed favour to some of those to whom *he* was hostile; and when writing to the senate on the occasion of the death of Nero, he merely called him Sejanus, and directed them not to offer sacrifice to any man, nor to decree any honours to himself, and of consequence to no one else. The senators easily saw whither all this tended, and their neglect of Sejanus was now pretty openly displayed.

Tiberius, having thus made trial of the senate and the people, and finding he could rely on both, resolved to strike the long-meditated blow. In order to take his victim more completely at unawares, he gave out that it was his intention to confer on him the tribunician power. Meantime he gave to Nævius Sertorius Macro a secret commission to take the command of the guards, made him the bearer of a letter to the senate, and instructed him fully how to act. Macro entered Rome at night, and communicated his instructions to the consul, C. Memmius Regulus, (for his colleague was a creature of Sejanus,) and to Græcinus Laco, the commander of the watchmen, and arranged with them the plan of action. Early in the morning he went up to the temple of the Palatine Apollo, where the senate was to sit that day, and meeting Sejanus, and finding him disturbed at Tiberius' having sent him no message, he whispered him that he had the grant of the tribunician power for him. Sejanus then went in highly elated; and Macro, showing his commission to

the guards on duty, and telling them that he had letters promising them a largess, sent them down to their camp, and put the watchmen about the temple in their stead. He then entered the temple, and having delivered the letter to the consuls, immediately went out again, and leaving Laco to watch the progress of events there, hastened down to the camp lest there should be a mutiny of the guards.

The letter was long and ambiguous; it contained nothing direct against Sejanus, but first treated of something else, then came to a little complaint of him, then to some other matter, then it returned to him again, and so on; it concluded by saying that two senators, who were most devoted to Sejanus, ought to be punished, and himself to be cast into prison; for though Tiberius wished most ardently to have him executed, he did not venture to order his death, fearing a rebellion. He even implored them in the letter to send one of the consuls with a guard to conduct him, now an old man and desolate, into their presence. We are further told that such were his apprehensions, that he had given orders, in case of a tumult, to release his grandson Drusus, who was in chains at Rome, and put him at the head of those who remained faithful to his family; and that he took his station on a lofty rock, watching for the signals that were to be made, having ships ready to carry him to some of the legions in case anything adverse should occur.

His precautions however were needless. Before the letter was read, the senators, expecting to hear nothing but the praises of Sejanus and the grant of the tribunician power, were loud in testifying their zeal toward him; but as the reading proceeded their conduct sensibly altered; their looks were no longer the same; even some of those who were sitting near him rose and left their seats; the prætors and tribunes closed round him lest he should rush out and try to raise the guards, as he certainly would have done had not the letter been composed with such consummate artifice. He was in fact so thunderstruck, that it was not till the consul had called him the third time that he was able to reply. All then joined in reviling and insulting him: he was conducted to the prison by the consul and the other magistrates. As he passed along the populace poured curses and abuse on him; they cast down his statues, cut the heads off of them, and dragged them about the streets. The senate, seeing this disposition of the people, and finding that the guards remained quiet, met in

the afternoon in the temple of Concord, close to the prison, and condemned him to death. He was executed without delay; his lifeless body was flung out on the Gemonian steps, where for three days it lay exposed to every insult from the populace; and then was cast into the Tiber*. His children also were put to death: his little daughter, who was to have been the bride of the prince's grand nephew, was so young and innocent, that as they carried her to prison she kept asking what she had done, and whither they were dragging her, adding that she would do so no more, and that she might be whipped if naughty. Nay, by one of those odious refinements of barbarity which trample on justice and humanity while adhering to the letter of the law, because it was a thing unheard of for a virgin to be capitally punished, the executioner was made to deprive her of that name before he strangled her. Apicata, the divorced wife of Sejanus, on hearing of the death of her children, and seeing afterwards their lifeless bodies on the steps, went home; and having written to Tiberius a full account of the true manner of the death of Drusus and of the guilt of Livilla, put an end to herself. In consequence of this discovery, Livilla, and all who were concerned in that murder, were put to death.

The rage of the populace was also vented on the friends of Sejanus, and many of them were slaughtered. The prætorian guards too, enraged at being suspected and at the watchmen being preferred to them, began to burn and plunder houses. The senators were in a state of the utmost perturbation, some trembling on account of their having paid court to Sejanus, others, who had been accusers or witnesses, from not knowing how their conduct might be taken. All however conspired in heaping insult on the memory of the fallen favourite.

Tiberius, now free from all apprehension, gave loose to his vengeance. From his island-retreat he issued his orders, and the prison was filled with the friends and creatures of Sejanus; the baleful pack of informers was unkenneled, and their victims of both sexes were hunted to death. Some were executed in prison; others were flung from the Capitol; the lifeless remains were exposed to every kind of indignity, and then cast into the river. Most however chose a voluntary death; for

* See the graphic picture of the fall of Sejanus in Juvenal, Sat. x. 56 *seq.* The Gemonian steps (probably so named from the effect, like the Bridge of Sighs at Venice) were between the prison and the Temple of Concord in view of the Forum. Dion, lvi. 5. The practice of exposing dead bodies on them prevailed also in the time of the republic. See Liv. xxxviii. 59. Ov. *Ibis*, 167. Val. Max. vi. 3, 3; 9, 13.

they thus not only escaped insult and pain, but preserved their property for their children.

In the following year (32) Tiberius ventured to leave his island, and sail up the Tiber as far as Cæsar's gardens; but suddenly, no one knew why, he retreated again to his solitude, whence by letters he directed the course of cruelty at Rome. The commencement of one was so remarkable that historians have thought it deserving of a place in their works; it ran thus: "What I shall write to you, P. C., or how I shall write, or what I shall not write at this time, may the gods and goddesses destroy me worse, than I daily feel myself perishing, if I know*." A knight named M. Terentius at this time, when accused of the new crime of Sejanus' friendship, had the courage to adopt a novel course of defence. He boldly acknowledged the charge, but justified his conduct by saying that he had only followed the example of the prince, whom it was their duty to imitate. The senate acquitted him and punished his accusers with exile or death, and Tiberius expressed himself well-pleased at the decision. But in the succeeding year (33) his cruelty, joined with avarice (a vice new to him), broke out with redoubled violence. Tired of murdering in detail, he ordered a general massacre of all who lay in prison on account of their connection with Sejanus. Without distinction of age, sex or rank, they were slaughtered; their friends dared not to approach, or even be seen to shed tears; and as their putrifying remains floated along the Tiber, no one might venture to touch or to burn them.

The deaths of his grandson Drusus, and his daughter-in-law Agrippina, were added to the atrocities of this year. The former perished by the famine to which he was destined, after he had sustained life till the ninth day by eating the stuffing of his bed. The tyrant then had the shamelessness to cause to be read in the senate the diary which had been kept of everything the unhappy youth had said or done for a course of years, and of the indignities which he had endured from the slaves and guards who were set about him. Agrippina had cherished hopes of meeting with justice after the fall of

* Suet. Tib. 67; Tac. Ann. vi. 6: "Adeo," adds Tacitus, "facinora atque flagitia sua ipsi quoque in supplicium verterant. Neque frustra præstantissimus sapientiæ [Plato] firmare solitus est, si recludantur tyrannorum mentes posse aspici laniatus et ictus; quando ut corpora verberibus, ita sævitia, libidine, malis consultis animus dilaceretur: quippe Tiberium non fortuna, non solitudines protegebant, quin tormenta pectoris suasque ipse poenas fateretur."

Sejanus; but finding them frustrated, she resolved to starve herself to death. Tiberius, when informed, ordered food to be forced down her throat, but she finally accomplished her purpose: he then endeavoured to defame her memory by charging her with unchastity. As her death occurred on the same day as that of Sejanus two years before, he directed it to be noted, and he took to himself as a merit that he had not caused her to be strangled and cast out on the Gemonian steps. The obsequious senate returned him thanks for his clemency, and decreed that on the 18th of October, the day of both their deaths, an offering in gold should be made to Jupiter.

The Cæsarian family was now reduced to Claudius, the brother and Caius the son of Germanicus, and his three daughters, Agrippina, Drusilla and Livilla, (whom Tiberius had given in marriage respectively to Cn. Domitius, L. Cassius and M. Vinicius,) and Tiberius and Julia the children of Drusus, which last had been married to her cousin Nero, and now was given in marriage to C. Rubellius Blandus.

From his very outset in life, Tiberius had been obliged more or less to conceal his natural character. Augustus, Germanicus, Drusus, his mother, had successively been a check on him; and even Sejanus, though the agent of his cruelty, had been the cause of his lusts being restrained*. But now all barriers were removed; for Caius was so abject a slave to him, that he modeled himself on his character and his words, only seeking to conceal his own vices†. He therefore now at length gave free course to all his vicious propensities, and it almost chills the blood to read the details of the horrid practices in which he indulged amidst the rocks of Capreæ. Meantime there was no relaxation of his cruelty; Macro was as bad as Sejanus, only more covertly; there was no lack of delators, and men of rank perished daily.

Nature however at last began to give way. The emperor had again quitted his island, and approached to within seven miles of Rome (37); but terrified, it is said, by a prodigy, he did not venture to enter the city. As he was on his way back to Campania he fell sick at Astura; having recovered a little, he went on to Circeii, where, to conceal his condition, he appeared at the public games, and even flung darts at a wild boar which was turned out into the arena. The effort however exhausted him, and he became worse; still he went on, and reached the former abode of Lucullus at Misenum. Each

* Tac. Ann. vi. 51.

† *Id. ib.* 20.

day he lay at table and indulged as usual. A physician named Charicles, under pretence of taking leave, one evening contrived to feel his pulse. Tiberius perceived his object, and ordering more dishes up lay longer than usual, under the pretext of doing honour to his departing friend; but Charicles was not to be deceived; he told Macro that he could not last two days, and measures were forthwith taken for securing the succession of Caius. On the 16th of March he swooned away, and appeared to be dead. Caius was congratulated by most of those present, and was preparing to assume the imperial power, when word was brought that Tiberius had revived and called for food. All slunk away feigning grief or ignorance; Caius remained in silence expecting his fate, but Macro boldly ordered clothes to be heaped on the emperor, who thus was smothered to death in the seventy-eighth year of his age.

CHAPTER IV.*

CAIUS JULIUS CÆSAR CALIGULA.

A.U. 790-794. A.D. 37-41.

Accession of Caius—his vices and cruelty—bridge over the bay of Baie—his expedition to Germany—his mad caprices—his death.

THE intelligence of the death of Tiberius diffused universal joy. The memory of Germanicus and the hard fate of his family recurred to men's minds, and led them to think favourably of his son, and to conceive hopes of happiness under his dominion. As Caius† therefore, in a mourning habit and in attendance on the corpse of his grandfather, moved from Misenum to Rome, joyful crowds poured forth to meet him, altars were raised and victims slain on the way, and the most endearing epithets greeted him as he passed along‡.

When he reached Rome he proceeded to the senate-house, and the will of the late prince was opened and read. It appeared that he had left Caius and Tiberius the son of Drusus joint heirs; but the will was at once set aside under the pretext of the testator not having been in his right mind, and

* Authorities: Suetonius and Dion.

† So he is called by all the historians. For the origin of his *soubriquet* "Caligula," see above, p. 43.

‡ "Fausta omnia *sidus* et *pullum* et *puppm* et *alumnus* appellantium." Suet. Cal. 13.

the sole power was conferred on Caius, so entirely with the public approbation, that it was computed that in less than three months upwards of 160,000 victims were slain at the altars of the gods in testimony of the general joy. Caius in return was lavish of professions assuring the senate that he would share his power with them, and do everything that pleased them, calling himself their son and foster-child. He then released all who were in prison on charges of treason, and he burned (or rather pretended to do so) all the papers relating to them which Tiberius had left behind him, saying that he did so in order that if he should feel ill-disposed toward any one on account of his mother and brothers, he might not have it in his power to gratify his vengeance.

As soon as he had celebrated the obsequies of his grandfather, whose funeral-oration he pronounced himself, he got on shipboard, and though the weather was tempestuous, passed over to the isles of Pandateria and Pontia; and having collected, and with his own hand incensed the ashes of his mother and brother, he brought them to Rome, and deposited them in the mausoleum of Augustus. He appointed annual religious rites in their honour; he directed the month of September to be called Germanicus, after his father; he caused all the honours, which had ever been bestowed on Livia Augusta, to be conferred by one decree on his grandmother Antonia; he made his uncle Claudius, who had hitherto been in the equestrian order, his colleague in the consulate; he adopted his cousin Tiberius the day he took the virile *toga*, and named him Prince of the Youth; he caused his sisters' names to be associated with his own in oaths and other solemnities*.

He drove from the city all the ministers of the monstrous lusts of Tiberius, being with difficulty withheld from drowning them. He permitted the works of Crematius Cordus† and others to be made public. He gave the people abundance of public shows, and he distributed to them and the soldiers all the money that had been left them by Tiberius and Livia Augusta.

Such was Caius in the first months of his reign. He then had a severe fit of illness, in consequence of which his intellect it would seem became disordered, for his remaining acts

* "*Auctor fuit ut omnibus sacramentis adjiceretur, Neque me liberosque meos cariores habedo quam Caium sororesque ejus. Item relationibus consulum, Quod bonum felisque sit C. Cæsari sororibusque ejus.*"—Suet. Cal. 15.

† See above, p. 56.

were those of a madman; and the world witnessed the dreadful sight of a monster, devoid of reason, possessed of unlimited power. There however seems to have been no reason to expect that under any circumstances Caius would have made a good prince; he was already stained with every vice. While yet a boy he was, it was said, guilty of incest with his sister Drusilla. On the death of his wife Junia Claudilla, the daughter of M. Silanus, he formed an adulterous connexion with Ennia, the wife of Macro, and gave her an engagement to marry her if he should attain the empire. Though he conducted himself with the most consummate dissimulation, and manifested such obsequiousness to Tiberius as gave occasion to the well-known saying of Crispus Passienus, that "there never was a better slave nor a worse master," yet the sagacious old prince saw his real character; and as Caius was one day in his presence speaking with contempt of Sulla, he told him that *he* would have all Sulla's vices and none of his virtues: he also said at times that Caius lived for his own destruction and that of all others, and that in him he was rearing a serpent for the Roman people and a Phaëthon for the earth.

One of the first acts of Caius, after his restoration to health, was to put his cousin Tiberius to death, under the pretext of his having prayed that he might not recover. He also forced his father-in-law Silanus to terminate his own life because he had not accompanied him on his late voyage, pretending that he intended to occupy the empire if anything adverse had befallen him, though Silanus' only reason had been dislike of the sea. A knight had vowed to fight as a gladiator, and another person to die, if Caius should recover; and instead of rewarding them as they expected, he forced them to perform their vows.

Thus passed the first nine months of Caius' rule. He began the next year (38) auspiciously, by directing that the accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the revenue should be made public, according to the practice adopted by Augustus, but intermitted by Tiberius. He also revised the equestrian order, removing unworthy members, and introducing men of birth and property. He restored to the people the right of election, and abolished the excise-duty of one per cent., measures however both, it is said, condemned by men of sense, who deemed that no good could arise from giving power to those who knew not how to exercise it, and from diminishing without cause the regular revenue of the state.

On the other hand he showed the natural ferocity of his disposition by the delight with which he regarded the massacres of the amphitheatre, where on one occasion the number of condemned persons who were to be exposed to the wild beasts proving short, he ordered some of the spectators to be seized and cast to them, having previously cut out their tongues to prevent their crying out or reproaching him. He made Macro and his wife Ennia be their own executioners, and he put to death numbers of persons on the charge of having been the enemies of his parents or his brothers, producing against them the very papers which he pretended to have burnt. It was in fact the desire to gain possession of their properties that was his motive, for the vast treasures accumulated by Tiberius had already been dissipated.

Caius had renewed his incestuous intercourse with his sister Drusilla, whom he took from her husband L. Cassius, and then married to M. Lepidus, also the partaker in his vices. She died however in the course of the year, and nothing could exceed the grief which he manifested. He gave her a magnificent public funeral, and proclaimed so strict a *Justitium*, that it was a capital offence to laugh, bathe, or dine with one's own family or relations. All the honours which had been conferred on Livia were decreed to her; her statue was placed in the senate-house and forum. A temple was built and priests appointed in her honour; women, in giving testimony, were to swear by her divinity; a festival like that of the Mother of the Gods was to be celebrated on her birthday, and under the name of Panthea she received divine honours in all the cities of the empire. A senator named Livius Geminus obtained a large reward by swearing, imprecating destruction on himself and his children if he lied, that he saw her ascending into heaven and mingling with the gods. Caius, in the first vehemence of his grief, fled from Rome in the night, and never stopped till he reached Syracuse, whence he returned with his hair and beard grown to a great length. His oath ever after when addressing the people or the soldiers was by the deity of Drusilla. He lived in an incestuous commerce with his other sisters also, and at meals they lay by turns below him in the *triclinium*, while his wife lay above; yet he used to prostitute them to the ministers of his lusts.

His first wife, after he came to the empire, was Livia Orestilla; this lady was married to C. Piso; but Caius, when invited to the nuptial feast, took a fancy to her, and saying to

Piso "Do not touch my wife," carried her off, and next day he issued an edict saying "that he had purveyed him a wife after the fashion of Romulus and Augustus." Within a few days however he divorced her, and two years after he banished her for having resumed her intimacy with her first husband. Hearing the beauty of the grandmother of Lollia Paullina praised, he summoned that lady from the province where her husband Memmius Regulus was in the command of the troops, and having obliged Regulus to divorce her, he made her his wife.

The following year (39) witnessed the same scenes of cruelty and of reckless extravagance; it was distinguished by the novel caprice of bridging over the sea from Baiæ to Puteoli, a space of more than three miles and a half. All kinds of craft were collected, so that in consequence of the want of foreign corn a great scarcity prevailed throughout Italy, and these not proving sufficient, a large number were built for the purpose; they were anchored in two lines and timber laid across them, and a way thus formed similar to the Appian road. Places for rest and refreshment were erected at regular distances, and pipes laid for conveying fresh water. When all was completed, Caius, putting on the breastplate (as it was said to be) of Alexander the Great, a military cloak of purple silk adorned with gold and precious stones, and girding on a sword, and grasping a shield, his brows crowned with oak, and having previously sacrificed to Neptune and some other deities, (particularly to Envy, to escape her influence,) advanced on the bridge from Baiæ, mounted on a stately horse, and followed by horse and foot in warlike array, and passing along rapidly, entered Puteoli as a captured city. Having rested there as after a battle, he returned the next day along the bridge in a two-horsed chariot, drawn by the most famous winning horses of the circus. Spoils and captives (among whom was Darius, an Arsacid, one of the Parthian hostages then at Rome,) preceded the sham conqueror; his friends followed in chariots, and the troops brought up the rear. The glorious victor ascended a tribunal erected on a ship about the centre of the bridge, and harangued and extolled his triumphant warriors. He then caused a banquet to be spread on the bridge as if it were an island, and all who were to partake of it crowding round it in vessels of every kind the rest of the day and the whole of the night were spent in feasting and revelry. Lights shone from the bridge and the vessels; the

hills which inclose the bay were illumined with fires and torches; the whole seemed one vast theatre, and night converted into day, as sea was into land. But the monster, for whose gratification all these effects had been produced, could not refrain from indulging his innate ferocity. When his spirits were elevated with meat and wine, he caused several of those who were with him on the bridge to be flung into the sea, and then getting into a beaked ship he sailed to and fro, striking and sinking the vessels which lay about the bridge filled with revellers. Some were drowned; but owing to the calmness of the sea, the greater part, though they were drunk, escaped.

Various causes were assigned for this mad freak of bridging over the sea. Some ascribed it, and probably with reason, to the wish to surpass Xerxes; others said that his object was to strike with awe of his power the Germans and Britons, whose countries he meditated to invade. Suetonius says that when a boy he heard from his grandfather that the reason assigned by the people of the palace was a desire to give the lie to a declaration of the astrologer Trasyllus, who on being consulted by Tiberius about the succession, had said that "Caius would no more reign than he would drive horses through the bay of Baïæ."

Whatever was the cause, the effect was the destruction of an additional number of the Roman nobility for the sake of confiscating their properties, in order to replace the enormous sums which the bridge had absorbed. When Rome and Italy had been thus tolerably well exhausted of their wealth, the tyrant resolved to pillage in like manner the opulent provinces of Gaul and then those of Spain. Under the pretext of repelling the Germans he suddenly collected an army and set out for Gaul, going sometimes so rapidly that the Prætorian cohorts were obliged to put their standards on the beasts of burden, at other times having himself carried in a litter, and the people of the towns on the way being ordered to sweep and water the roads before him. He was attended by a large train of women, gladiators, dancers, running-horses, and the other instruments of his luxury. When he reached the camp of the legions he affected the character of a strict commander, dismissing with ignominy such of the legates as brought up the auxiliary contingents slowly. He then turned to robbing both officers and men by dismissing them a little before they were entitled to their discharge, and cutting down the pensions of the rest to 6000 sesterces.

The son of Cinobellinus, a British prince, who was banished by his father, having come and made his submission to him, he wrote most magniloquent letters to Rome as if the whole island had submitted. He crossed the Rhine as if in quest of the German foes; but some one happening to say, as the troops were engaged in a narrow way, that there would be no little consternation if the enemy should then appear, he sprang from his chariot in a fright, mounted his horse and galloped back to the bridge, and finding it filled with the men and beasts of the baggage-train, he scrambled over their heads to get beyond the river. On another occasion he ordered some of his German guards to conceal themselves on the other side of the Rhine, and intelligence to be brought to him as he sat at dinner that the enemy was at hand; he sprang up, mounted his horse, and followed by his friends and part of the guards rode into the adjoining wood, and cutting the trees and forming a trophy, returned with it to the camp by torch-light. He then reproached the cowardice of those who had not shared his toils and dangers, and rewarded with what he called *exploratory crowns* those who had accompanied him. Again, he took the young German hostages from their school, and having secretly sent them on, he jumped up from a banquet, pursued them, as if they were running away, with a body of cavalry, and brought them back in chains. In an edict he severely rebuked the senate and people of Rome for holding banquets, and frequenting theatres and delicious retreats while Cæsar was carrying on war and exposed to such dangers.

His invasion of Britain was if possible still more ridiculous. He marched his troops to the coast, and drew them up with all their artillery on the strand. He then got aboard of a galley, and going a little way out to sea returned, and ascending a lofty tribunal gave the signal for battle, and at the sound of trumpets ordered them to charge the ocean, and gather its shells as spoils due to the Capitol and Palatium. He bestowed a large donative on his victorious troops, and built a lighthouse to commemorate the conquest of Ocean.

Meantime he was not neglectful of the purpose for which he came. He pillaged indiscriminately, and put to death numbers whose only crime was their wealth. One day, when he was playing at dice, he discovered that his money was out; he retired, and calling for the census of the Gauls, selected the names of the richest men in it, and ordered them to be put to death: then returning to his company, he said, "*You are play-*

ing for a few denars, but *I* have collected a hundred and fifty millions." He afterwards caused the most precious jewels and other possessions of the monarchy to be sent to him, and put them up to auction, saying, "This was my father's; this was my mother's; this Egyptian jewel belonged to Antonius; this to Augustus;" and so on, at the same time declaring that distress alone caused him to sell them. The buyers were of course obliged to give far beyond the real value of the articles.

Among those put to death while he was in Gaul was M. Lepidus, the husband of his beloved Drusilla, and the sharer in all his vices and debaucheries. The pretext was a conspiracy of Lepidus with Livilla and Agrippina against his life. He wrote to the senate in the most opprobrious terms of his sisters, whom he banished to the Pontian isles. As he was sending them back to Italy for this purpose, he obliged Agrippina to carry the whole way in her bosom the urn which contained the ashes of Lepidus. To commemorate his escape he sent three daggers to be consecrated to Mars the Avenger.

At this time also he put away Lollia Paullina, under the pretext of her infecundity, and married Milonia Cæsonia, a woman neither handsome nor young, and of the most dissolute habits and the mother already of three daughters. She was at the time so far gone with child by him that she was delivered of a daughter immediately after her marriage. He loved her ardently as long as he lived; he used to exhibit her naked to his friends, and take her riding about with him through the ranks of the soldiery arrayed in a cloak, helmet, and light buckler. Yet he would at times in his fondness protest that he would put her to the rack to make her tell why he loved her so much.

Before he left Gaul (40) he proposed to massacre the legions which had mutinied against his father. He was dissuaded from this course, but nothing would withhold him from decimating them at the least. He therefore called them together unarmed, and surrounded them with his cavalry; but when he observed that they suspected his design, and were gradually slipping away to resume their arms, he lost courage, and flying from the camp hastened back to Rome breathing vengeance against the senate. To the deputies, sent to entreat him to hasten his return, his words were, "I will come—I will come; and this with me," striking the hilt of his sword; and he declared that the senate would find him in future neither a citi-

zen nor a prince. He entered Rome in ovation instead of triumph on his birth-day (Aug. 31), the last he was to witness, for the measure of his guilt was full, and the patience of mankind nearly exhausted.

It may be worth while to notice some of the acts of which a madman possessed of absolute power was capable.

Caius declared himself to be a god, and had a temple erected to his deity, in which stood a golden statue of him habited each day as he was himself. Peacocks, pheasants, and other rare birds were offered in sacrifice every day: his wife Cæsonia, his uncle Claudius, and some persons of great wealth (who had to purchase the office at a high rate) were the priests. He added himself and his horse Incitatus to the college. He appeared in the habit and with the insignia sometimes of one, sometimes of another god or goddess. He used to invite the moon when shining full and bright to descend to his embraces. He would enter the temple of the Capitoline Jupiter and engage in confidential discourse, as it were, with the god, sometimes even chiding or threatening him. Being invited, he said, to share the abode of that deity, he threw a bridge across for that purpose from the Palatium to the Capitol. It would be endless to relate all his freaks of this kind.

He devised new and extraordinary taxes. He laid an impost on all kinds of eatables; he demanded two and a half per cent. on all law-suits, and severely punished all those who compounded their actions. Porters were required to pay an eighth of their daily earnings: prostitutes were taxed in a similar manner. He even opened a brothel in his palace, which he filled with respectable women, and sent persons through the Forum inviting people to resort to it. When his daughter was born he complained bitterly of his poverty, and received presents for her support and dower. On new-year's day he used to stand at the porch to receive the gifts which were brought to him. He would often walk barefoot on heaps of gold coin, or lie down and roll himself on them.

His natural cruelty made him delight in the combats of gladiators; he was equally fond of chariot-races, and as he chose to favour the sea-coloured faction, he used to cause the best drivers and horses of the rivals (the green) to be poisoned. He was so fond of one of his own horses named Incitatus, that he used to invite him to dinner, give him gilded barley and wine out of golden cups, and swear by his safety

and his fortune, and he was only prevented by death from raising him to the consulate.

One day, at a show of gladiators, he ordered the awning which screened the spectators from the burning rays of the sun, to be withdrawn, and forbade any one to be let go out. Another time, when the people applauded contrary to his wishes, he cried out, "Oh! that the Roman people had but one neck!"

A conspiracy at length delivered the world from the monster who thus oppressed it. The principal freedmen and officers of the guards were concerned in it; they were actuated by a principle of self-preservation, and not by any patriotic views or generous aspirations after the liberty and happiness of the Roman people. It was in effect, such a conspiracy as most usually occurs in absolute and despotic governments*. The most active agents were Cassius Chærea and Cornelius Sabinus, two tribunes of the guards, who had private motives of revenge, in particular Cassius, whom, though advanced in years and a man of great strength and courage, Caius used to term effeminate, and to give Venus or Priapus, or some such lascivious term, when he came to him for the watch-word.

On the 24th of January (41), a little after noon, though his stomach was suffering from the effects of the previous day's excess, Caius yielded to the instances of his friends, and was proceeding from the theatre, where he had passed the morning, to the dining-room. As he was going along the vaulted passage leading to it, he stopped to inspect some boys of noble birth from Ionia, whom he had caused to come to Rome to sing in public a hymn made in his honour. While thus engaged, he was fallen on and slain by Chærea, Sabinus, and other officers of the guards. A centurion, by the order of Chærea, killed in the course of the night his wife Cæsonia, and the brains of their infant daughter were dashed out against a wall. Such was the end of this execrable tyrant, in the twenty-ninth year of his age, after a reign of somewhat less than four years. After his death there were found in his cabinet two books, the one having for its title the Sword, the other the Dagger, and containing the names of those whom he intended to put to death. There was also discovered a large chest full of all kinds of poisons.

* A very circumstantial account of the murder of Caius, and the succession of Claudius, is given by Josephus, *Antiq.* xix. 1-4.

CHAPTER V*.

TIBERIUS CLAUDIUS DRUSUS CÆSAR.

A.U. 794-807. A.D. 41-55.

Accession of Claudius.—His character.—His useful measures.—Messalina and the freedmen.—Her lust and cruelty.—Claudius in Britain.—Vicious conduct of Messalina.—Her death.—Claudius marries Agrippina.—Is poisoned by her.

As soon as the death of Caius was known, the consuls set guards throughout the city, and assembled the senate on the Capitol, where the remainder of the day and all the night were spent in deliberation, some wishing to re-establish the republic, others to continue the monarchy. But while they were deliberating, the question had been already determined in the camp of the prætorian cohorts.

When Caius was slain, his uncle Claudius in his terror hid himself behind the door-curtains of one of the rooms. A common soldier, who was running through the palace in quest of plunder, happening to see his feet under the curtain, dragged him out. Claudius fell on his knees suing for mercy, but the soldier recognising him saluted him emperor, and led him to his comrades, who placed him in a litter, and carried him trembling for his life to their camp. The consuls sent the tribunes of the people to summon him as a senator to come and give his presence at their deliberations, but he replied that he was detained by force. In the morning, however, finding the troops unanimous in their design of conferring the supreme power on him, he consented to accept it, promising them a gratuity of 15,000 sesterces a man, thus introducing the pernicious practice of bargaining for the support of the guards. The senate, unable to agree among themselves, finding the people indifferent, and being deserted by the urban cohorts, abandoned the futile project of restoring the republic, and quietly yielded submission to the behest of the soldiery.

Tiberius Claudius Drusus Cæsar, who was thus unexpectedly raised to empire, was the younger brother of Germanicus. He was from infancy of a sickly delicate constitution, and the disease of his body affected his mind. His mother Antonia

* Authorities : Tacitus, Suetonius and Dion.

used to call him a portent of a man begun but not completed by Nature ; and when she would describe any one as particularly stupid, she would say he was a greater fool than her son Claudius. His grandmother Livia held him in the most supreme contempt. Augustus had so mean an opinion of him, that he would not confer on him any of the honours of the state. Tiberius treated him in a similar manner. Caius, in the first days of his reign, made him his colleague in the consulate, but it was only his contempt for his folly (which Claudius cunningly affected beyond nature) that saved him from sharing the fate of so many better men.

Mental ability is very distinct from good sense and wisdom. It need not therefore surprise us to learn that this prince, whose name in his own family was synonymous with stupidity, was learned, and wrote with ease and elegance in both the Greek and Latin languages*. He also, as is usually the case with such persons, exhibited occasional glimpses of shrewdness and sagacity, and made just observations, and conceived or proposed judicious plans. In fact, in examining the history and character of Claudius, one is often reminded of James I. of England, though the advantage, it must be allowed, is greatly on the side of the British monarch.

The first act of Claudius was to declare a full and complete amnesty (to which he faithfully adhered) of all that had been said and done in the last two days. He executed, however, Chærea, and some of the other assassins of Caius, not out of regard to him, but to deter others from attempting the life of an emperor ; Sabinus died by his own hand. Claudius exhibited no enmity against those who had injured or insulted him in the two last reigns, of whom the number was necessarily not small. He entirely abolished the law of treason, and taking the Sword and Dagger, and all the papers which Caius had pretended to burn, he showed them to the senate, and letting them see the names of the writers, and of the persons against whom they were written, burned them in good earnest. While he sedulously abolished all the wild innovations of Caius, he was anxious to have all kinds of honours bestowed on the memory of his family. He recalled his nieces Agrippina and Livilla from their exile, and restored to them their property.

Claudius, who was fifty years of age, and whose life had

* Suetonius (Claud. 41) speaks rather favourably of his historical writings. He seems to have been honest and impartial.

been passed chiefly in the study of antiquity, understood and wished to conform as much as possible to the forms of the ancient constitution. He declined to use the *prænomen* Emperor; he refused excessive honours; he celebrated the weddings of his two daughters as if he had been a simple citizen; he did nothing of public import without the authority of the senate; he showed all due marks of respect to the consuls and the other magistrates. By this conduct he so won the popular favour, that when one time he went to Ostia, and a rumour was spread that he had been assassinated, the people assembled and poured their maledictions on the senate and the guards as murderers and traitors, and were not pacified till they were assured by the magistrates of his safety.

In the second year of his reign (42) Claudius commenced a work of great utility, but of enormous expense. For many years past tillage had been so completely abandoned in Italy, that nearly all the corn that was used in Rome was imported from Africa and Sicily. But as there were no secure ports or landing-places at the mouth of the Tiber, the supplies could only be brought in during the fine season, and if a sufficient quantity was not then warehoused for the winter's consumption, a famine was the sure consequence. To remedy this evil, Claudius, undeterred by the magnitude of the estimate given in by the surveyors, resolved to construct a port at Ostia. It was formed in the following manner. A large basin was dug in the land, on the right bank of the river, and the sea let into it; two extensive moles were then run out into the sea, including another large basin, at the entrance to which, on an artificial island, stood a Pharos or lighthouse to direct vessels into it*. By means of this port corn could be brought in at all times of the year, and the danger of famine in the city was greatly diminished. Another public work effected by Claudius, was the bringing the stream named the New Anio to Rome, and distributing it there into a number of handsome reservoirs. He attempted a still greater work, namely, the draining of the Fucine lake in the Marsian country, which we shall hereafter have occasion to notice. Another of his public works was the rebuilding of the theatre of Pompeius, which had been destroyed by fire.

The conduct of Claudius had been so far commendable,

* Dion, ix. 11; Suet. Claud. 20. Juvenal (Sat. xii. 75 *seq.*) also describes this port.

but constancy was not to be expected in a man of his feeble character. It was observed that he took immoderate delight in the barbarous sports of the amphitheatre, and hence it was inferred that he would shed blood without any repugnance; but what caused greater apprehension was his absolute submission to his wife and freedmen, of whose will he was merely the agent. His wife was Valeria Messalina, the daughter of his cousin Barbatus Messala, a woman whose name has become proverbial for infamy. His most distinguished freedmen were the eunuch Posidus; Felix whom he made governor of Judæa, and who had the fortune to be the husband of three queens; and Callistus, who retained the power which he had acquired under Caius. But far superior in point of influence to these were the three secretaries (as we may term them) Polybius, Narcissus and Pallas. The first was the assistant of his studies (*a studiis*), and ranked so high that he might be often seen walking between the two consuls; Narcissus was his private secretary (*ab epistolis*); and Pallas (the brother of Felix) was treasurer (*a rationibus*). The two last were in strict league with Messalina; she only sought to gratify her lusts, they longed for honours, power, and wealth; and such were the riches they acquired, that when Claudius was one time complaining of the poverty of his exchequer, some one told him that he would be rich enough if he could induce his two freedmen to take him into partnership.

Their plan, when they would have any one put to death, was to terrify Claudius (who, like weak people in general, was a consummate coward) by tales of plots against his life. They commenced in his very second year by assailing C. Annæus Silanus, whom the emperor had summoned from Spain, where he was governor, given him in marriage the mother of Messalina, and treated him as one of his most intimate friends. The abandoned Messalina soon cast an eye of lust on her stepfather, and on his rejecting her advances she plotted with Pallas to destroy him. Accordingly Pallas came early one morning into Claudius' chamber, and told him that he had had a dream in which he saw him slain by Silanus. Messalina helped to increase his alarm, and an order was obtained for the execution of the innocent nobleman.

This wanton murder caused general alarm, and was the occasion of a conspiracy against Claudius, in which the principal person engaged was Annæus Vinicianus, a man of high rank. As he had no force to oppose to the guards, he sent to

Furius Camillus Scribonianus, who commanded in Dalmatia, inviting him to join in the conspiracy, and holding out to him a prospect of the empire. Camillus assented; many senators and knights repaired to him; he took the title of Emperor, and wrote to Claudius, desiring him to retire into a private station, a command which the feeble prince had thoughts of obeying. But the legions of Camillus, though at first inclined to second him, when they heard him speak of the people, and of ancient liberty, began to think that a revolution would not be for their advantage. They therefore refused to obey him, and he fled to an island off the coast, and put an end to his life. Messalina and the freedmen now gave a loose to their passion for blood and for plunder. Slaves and freedmen were admitted as witnesses against their masters, and though Claudius had sworn at his accession that no freedman should be put to the torture, knights and senators, citizens and strangers, were tortured without distinction. Vinicianus and some others anticipated the executioner. Men and women perished alike, and their bodies were indiscriminately flung out on the Gemonian Steps. Yet some, and those of the most guilty, escaped, partly by favour, partly by money given to the freedmen; and the children, without exception, of those who perished remained uninjured; some even obtained part of the property of their family.

Among those who suffered, there were two whose cases are deserving of notice. Galæsus, a freedman of Camillus', when brought before Claudius and the senate, exhibited great constancy and courage. Pallas, stepping forward presumptuously, said to him, "What would you have done, Galæsus, if Camillus had become the monarch?" "I would have stood behind him and held my tongue!" was the reply of the undaunted freedman. The other case was that of Cæcina Pætus and his wife Arria. When Pætus, who was engaged with Camillus, was put on board a ship to be conveyed to Rome, Arria besought the soldiers to allow her to go in the vessel with him, saying, that surely they would let a man of consular rank have some slaves to dress him and to attend him at table, and that she would discharge these offices. They, however, refused, and she then hired a small fishing-boat and followed the ship*. When Pætus was condemned to death, this high-minded woman, though she might have lived in honour by the favour of Messalina, who had much regard for her, disdained to survive

* Plin. Ep. iii. 16.

him ; and not merely so, but when she saw him hesitating to die, she took the sword, and having stabbed herself, handed it to him, saying, " See, Pætus, I am in no pain." " They were praised," adds the historian Dion, " for from the continuance of evil, matters were come to that state that nothing but dying courageously was counted virtue."

At length, when no more victims remained, the persecution ceased (43). Claudius then, as usual, made some useful acts of legislation, such as diminishing the number of holidays, and obliging governors to repair betimes to their provinces, and not to remain in the city. He also deprived many unworthy persons of the rights of citizenship, and conferred them on others. In this Messalina and the freedmen carried on a most extensive trade : and in their eagerness to catch at all that could be obtained, they brought down so much the price (which used to be very high) that it became a common saying that one had only to give a parcel of broken glass to be made a citizen.

Messalina now set no bounds to her vicious courses. Not content with being infamous herself, she would have others so : and she actually used to compel ladies to prostitute themselves even in the palace, and before the eyes of their husbands, whom she rewarded with honours and commands, while she contrived to destroy those who would not acquiesce in their wives' dishonour. Her cruelty extended also to her own sex and to her husband's kindred ; she had already (41) caused Livilla to be put to death on a charge of adultery (in which the philosopher Seneca was implicated, and in consequence exiled to Corsica), but the real ground of offence was Livilla's beauty, and her intimacy with her uncle. She now became jealous of Julia the grand-daughter of Tiberius, whom she soon contrived to deprive of life. Meantime her own excesses were unknown to her husband, for she generally caused one of her maids to occupy her place in his bed, and she bought off by benefits, or anticipated by punishments, those who could give him information*.

The wars on the frontiers had been of late against the Germans in Europe, and the Moors in Africa, and Ser. Sulpicius Galba, the future emperor, had vanquished the Cattans, and C. Suetonius Paulinus had carried the Roman arms to the foot of Atlas. The plan of conquering Britain was now resumed,

* The picture of the depravity of this abandoned woman given by Juvenal (vi. 114 *seq.*) is not overcharged.

and partly effected*. An exiled British prince having applied to Claudius, orders were sent to A. Plautius, who commanded in Gaul, to lead his troops into the island. Plautius obeyed, and subdued a part of the country south of the Thames. At his desire Claudius himself proceeded to Britain, and having crossed that river, and defeated an army of the natives, he returned to Rome (after a stay of only sixteen days in the island) and celebrated a triumph (44). The title of Britannicus was decreed by the senate to himself and to his young son, and honours were conferred on Messalina similar to those enjoyed by Livia Augusta.

Little of importance occurred for the next two or three years. As the 800th year of the city arrived in his reign (47), Claudius celebrated the secular games, alleging (it would seem with truth, though he had asserted the contrary in his own historical works) that Augustus had anticipated the proper time. The proclamation being made in the usual form caused a good deal of merriment; for the crier invited the people to games "which no one had seen before nor would ever see again," whereas there were many who well remembered those of Augustus in the year 737, and even some of the actors who had then performed appeared now on the stage.

While Claudius was celebrating his games and regulating, at times advantageously, the affairs of the empire, Messalina still ran her mad career of vice, often making her stupid husband the broker, as it were, of her pleasures. Thus, when Mnester, a celebrated dancer, with whom she fell violently in love, could be seduced neither by her promises nor her threats, she obtained from Claudius (pretending some other purpose) an order to him to do whatever she should require of him. Mnester therefore, thinking that she had full licence from her husband, complied with her desires. The same was the case with many others, who deemed that they were acting in obedience to the wishes of the prince when intriguing with his wife.

The chief object of her affection at this time was C. Silius, the handsomest man in Rome, and then consul-elect. She drove away his wife Junia Silana, that she might have the sole possession of him; and Silius, knowing that to refuse would be his destruction, while by compliance he might possibly escape, yielded to his fate. The adulteress had now become so se-

* For the affairs of Britain, the reader is referred to the author's History of England.

cure that she disdained concealment; she went openly to his house; she heaped wealth and honours on him; the slaves, the freedmen, the whole property, as it were, of the prince were transferred to the house of her paramour. Messalina thought not of danger, but Silius saw that he was so deep in guilt, that he or Claudius must fall. He therefore proposed to his mistress the murder of her husband, and the seizure of the supreme power, offering then to marry her, and to adopt her son. She hesitated, not from affection to her husband, but from fear lest Silius should when in power cast her off. The prospect of a more eminent degree of infamy finally prevailed with her, and she even resolved to become the wife of Silius at once.

What followed Tacitus thought would be regarded as so utterly beyond belief, that he deemed it necessary to assure his readers that he faithfully recorded the accounts transmitted by contemporary writers. Taking advantage of the absence of Claudius, who was gone to celebrate a sacrifice at Ostia (48), Messalina and Silius had their marriage publicly performed, with all the requisite forms and ceremonies; and as it was now the season of the vintage, they and their friends, habited as Bacchanals, acted all kinds of extravagances in the gardens of Silius' house. The freedmen meantime consulted how they should act. The confidence between them and Messalina was at an end, for she had caused Polybius to be put to death, and they saw that no reliance could be placed on her. The others hesitated, but Narcissus resolved to run all risks, and inform Claudius of her conduct. Having made the rest promise not to give Messalina any warning, he hastened down to Ostia, and there prevailed on Calpurnia and Cleopatra, two mistresses of the prince, to communicate to him the intelligence. Accordingly, when they were alone with him, Calpurnia, throwing herself at his knees, exclaimed that Messalina was married to Silius; Cleopatra confirmed her words; Narcissus was then called in. He craved pardon for having concealed her former transgressions, but said that this was a more serious case, and that the empire itself was at stake. Claudius then consulted with his friends, and it was their unanimous opinion that he should hasten at once to the camp of the prætorians and secure their fidelity. As however Geta, their commander, could not be relied on, Narcissus, seconded by those who stood in equal peril with himself, declared that it was absolutely necessary that the command of the guards should for that one day be transferred to one of the freedmen,

and offered to take the charge on himself, Then fearing lest L. Vitellius and P. Largus Cæcina, who were the creatures of Messalina, should succeed in moving Claudius to pity on his way to Rome, he asked and obtained a seat in the same carriage with him and them.

Intelligence of what was going on at Ostia soon reached Rome. The guilty pair were struck with consternation. Messalina retired to the gardens of Lucullus*, for the sake of which (a Roman Jezebel) she had, by means of her creature L. Vitellius, lately caused their owner, Valerius Asiaticus, to be judicially murdered. Silius, to conceal his fears, went about his public duties; but some centurions soon arrived, who put him and many others in bonds. Messalina resolved to try the effect of her presence on her weak husband. She ordered his children Britannicus and Octavia to be brought to her; she implored Vibidia the eldest of the Vestals to come and intercede for her. She then with only three companions crossed the city on foot, and getting into a gardener's cart, set out on the road to Ostia.

When she met her husband she cried out to him from afar to hear the mother of Octavia and Britannicus; but Narcissus reiterated Silius and her marriage, and gave Claudius the records of her infamy to read. As he was entering the city his children were presented to him; but Narcissus desired them to be removed. Vibidia then appeared, and required that he would not condemn his wife unheard. Narcissus replied that she should have an opportunity of defending herself, and bade the Vestal meantime to go and attend to her sacred duties.

Narcissus conducted Claudius to the house of Silius, that he might have ocular proof of his guilt. He thence took him to the camp, where Claudius, at his dictation, addressed a few words to the soldiers, who replied with a shout, calling for judgement on the guilty. Silius was brought before the tribunal; he made no defence, and only prayed for a speedy death. His example was followed by several illustrious knights. The only case that caused any delay was that of the dancer Mnester, who pleaded the prince's command for what he had done. Claudius was dubious how to act; but the freedmen urged that it would be folly to think of a player when so many noblemen were put to death, and that it mattered not whether he acted voluntarily or not in com-

* On the Pincian Hill.

mitting such a crime. Mnester also was therefore put to death.

Messalina had returned to the gardens of Lucullus. She did not yet despair if she could but get access to her husband. As Claudius, when he grew warm with wine at his dinner, desired some one to go tell that wretched woman (so he termed her) to be prepared to make her defence the next day, Narcissus saw that all was again at stake. He therefore ran out and told the tribune and centurions on guard that the emperor had ordered his wife to be put to death. They proceeded to the gardens of Lucullus, where they found her lying on the ground, her mother Lepida, who in her prosperity had avoided her, sitting beside her, and persuading her to take refuge in a voluntary death. The unfortunate woman's mind, however, was too much enervated by luxury for her to possess sufficient courage for such an act. The freedman who accompanied the officers having loaded her with abuse, she took a sword and made some ineffectual attempts to stab herself; the tribune then ran her through. Claudius, when informed of her fate, testified neither joy nor grief. By a decree of the senate, all memorials of Messalina were abolished; and the quæstorian ensigns were voted to Narcissus.

The freedmen now had the task of selecting another wife for their feeble prince, who was not capable of leading a single life, and who was sure to be governed by the successful candidate. The principal women in Rome were ambitious of the honour of sharing the bed of the imperial idiot, but the claims of all were forced to yield to those of Lollia Paullina the former wife of Caius, Julia Agrippina the daughter of Germanicus, and Ælia Petina, Claudius' own divorced wife. The first was patronized by Callistus, the second by Pallas, the last by Narcissus. Agrippina, however, in consequence of her frequent access to her uncle, easily triumphed over her rivals: the only difficulty that presented itself was that of a marriage between uncle and niece being contrary to Roman manners, and being even regarded as incestuous. This difficulty, however, the compliant L. Vitellius, who was then censor, undertook to remove. He addressed the senate, stating the necessity of a domestic partner to a prince who had on him such weighty public cares. He then launched forth in praise of Agrippina; as to the objection of the nearness of kindred, such unions he said were practised among other na-

tions, and at one time first-cousins did not use to marry, which now they did so commonly. The servile assembly outran the speaker in zeal; they rushed out of the house, and a promiscuous rabble collected, shouting that such was the wish of the Roman people. Claudius repaired to the senate-house, and caused a decree to be made legalising marriages between uncles and nieces; and he then formally espoused Agrippina. Yet such was the light in which the incestuous union was viewed, that, corrupt as the Roman character was become, only two persons were found to follow the imperial example*.

Agrippina also proposed to unite her son Domitius with Octavia the daughter of Claudius: but here there was a difficulty also, for Octavia was betrothed to L. Silanus. Again, however, she found a ready tool in the base Vitellius, to whose son Junia Calvina, the sister of Silanus, had been married. As the brother and sister indulged their affection imprudently, though not improperly, the worthy censor took the occasion to make a charge of incest against Silanus, and to strike him out of the list of senators. Claudius then broke off the match, and Silanus put an end to himself on the very day of Agrippina's marriage. His sister was banished, and Claudius ordered some ancient rites expiatory of incest to be performed, unconscious of the application of them which would be made to himself.

The woman, who had now obtained the government of Claudius and the Roman empire, was of a very different character from the abandoned Messalina. The latter had nothing noble about her, she was the mere bondslave of lust, and cruel and avaricious only for its gratification; but Agrippina was a woman of superior mind, though utterly devoid of principle. In *her*, lust was subservient to ambition; it was the desire of power or the fear of death, and not wantonness, that made her submit to the incestuous embraces of her brutal brother Caius, and to be prostituted to the companions of his vices. It was ambition and parental love that made her now form an incestuous union with her uncle. To neither of her husbands, Cn. Domitius or Crispus Passienus, does she appear to have been voluntarily unfaithful; the bed of Claudius

* The Church of Rome forbids both these marriages, but grants dispensations for them; and in Popish countries the marriages of uncle and niece are common. They were also common in Athens: see *Demosthenes in Næær. 2.*

was, however, not fated to be unpolluted; for as a means of advancing her views, Agrippina formed an illicit connexion with Pallas.

The great object of Agrippina was to exclude Britannicus, and obtain the succession for her own son Domitius Nero, now a boy of twelve years of age. She therefore caused Octavia to be betrothed to him, and she had the philosopher Seneca recalled from Corsica, whither he had been exiled by the arts of Messalina, and committed to him the education of her son, that he might be fitted for empire. In the following year (51) Claudius, yielding to her influence, adopted him.

In order to bring Nero forward, Agrippina caused him to assume the virile *toga* before the usual age (52), and the servile senate desired of Claudius that he might be consul at the age of twenty, and meantime be elect with proconsular power without the city. A donative was given to the soldiers, and a congiary (*congiarium*) to the people in his name. At the Circensian games given to gain the people, Nero appeared in the triumphal habit; Britannicus in a simple *prætexta*. Every one who showed any attachment to this poor youth was removed on one pretence or another, and he was surrounded with the creatures of Agrippina. Finally, as the two commanders of the guards were supposed to be attached to the interests of the children of Messalina, she persuaded Claudius that their discipline would be much improved if they were placed under one commander. Accordingly those officers were removed, and the command was given to Burrus Afranius, a man of high character for probity and of great military reputation, and who knew to whom he was indebted for his elevation.

The pride and haughtiness of Agrippina far transcended anything that Rome had as yet witnessed in a woman. When (51) the British prince Caractacus and his family, whom P. Ostorius had sent captives to the emperor, were led before him as he sat on his tribunal in the plain under the prætorian camp, with all the troops drawn out, Agrippina appeared seated on another tribunal, as the partner of his power. And again, when (53) the letting off of the Fucine lake was celebrated with a naval combat, she presided with him, habited in a military cloak of cloth of gold.

Agrippina at length (55) grew weary of delay, or fearful of discovery. Narcissus, who saw at what she was aiming, appeared resolved to exert all his influence in favour of Bri-

tannicus; and Claudius himself, one day when he was drunk, was heard to say that it was his fate to bear with the infamy of his wives and then to punish it. He had also begun to show peculiar marks of affection for Britannicus. She therefore resolved to act without delay; and as Claudius, having become unwell, had retired to Sinuessa for change of air and the benefit of the waters, she proposed to take advantage of the opportunity thus presented. She procured from a woman named Locusta, infamous for her skill in poisoning, a poison of the most active nature. The eunuch Halotus, who was the emperor's taster, then infused it in a dish of mushrooms, a kind of food in which he delighted. The poison, however, acted violently on his bowels, and Agrippina, in dismay lest he should recover, made a physician who was at hand introduce a poisoned feather into his throat by way of making him discharge his stomach, and in this manner the nefarious deed was completed. The death of Claudius was concealed till all the preparations for the succession of Nero should be made, and the fortunate hour marked by the astrologers be arrived. He then (Oct. 13) issued from the palace, accompanied by Burrus, and being cheered by the cohort which was on guard, he mounted a litter and proceeded to the camp. He addressed the soldiers, promising them a donative, and was saluted emperor. The senate and provinces acquiesced without a murmur in the will of the guards.

Claudius was in his sixty-fourth year when he was poisoned; and he had reigned thirteen years and nine months, wanting a few days.

CHAPTER VI.*

NERO CLAUDIUS CÆSAR.

A.U. 808-821. A.D. 55-68.

Decline of Agrippina's power.—Poisoning of Britannicus.—Murder of Agrippina.—Nero appears on the stage.—Murder of Octavia.—Excesses of Nero.—Burning of Rome.—Conspiracy against Nero.—Death of Seneca.—Deaths of Petronius, Thraseas and Soranus.—Nero visits Greece.—Galba proclaimed emperor.—Death of Nero.

THE new emperor† was only seventeen years of age. On account of his youth and his obligations to her, Agrippina hoped to enjoy the power of the state; but Nero was not feeble-minded like Claudius, and Seneca and Burrus were resolved to keep in check the influence of a haughty unprincipled woman. All outward honours, however, were shown her. When the tribune, according to custom, asked the emperor for the word, he gave, 'My best Mother'; the senate decreed her sundry privileges, but Burrus and Seneca checked her lust of blood. She had however caused Junius Silanus, the proconsul of Asia, to be poisoned for being of the imperial family, and she forced Narcissus to be his own executioner. When the senators were summoned to the palace on any affair of state, she used to stand behind the door-curtain that she might be present and share in the debate without being seen; and when ambassadors came from Armenia, she was about to ascend the tribunal with her son, had not Seneca bidden the emperor to go and meet his mother, and thus by the show of filial duty the disgrace to the majesty of Rome was avoided.

All now was full of promise. The young emperor made speeches, the compositions of Seneca, replete with sentiments of clemency and justice. He declared that Augustus should be his model in government. He diminished the taxes, and reduced the rewards of informers to a fourth. When required to sign the warrant for the execution of a criminal, "How I could wish," said he, "that I were ignorant of letters!"

* Authorities: Tacitus, Suetonius and Dion.

† We shall henceforth employ this term. Its original meaning must be familiar to the reader.

He practised many popular arts, and acted in a character easy to assume, but difficult to maintain if not prompted by nature.

The power of Agrippina received its first shock (56) by the passion of her son for a freedwoman named Acte, a native of Asia, and as he fain would have it, a descendant of the kings of Pergamus. His graver friends were willing to wink at this attachment, for as he testified an aversion for his chaste and modest wife Octavia, they thought it would be a means of keeping him from debauching women of rank. But the violent Agrippina at first set no bounds to her rage; then passing to the other extreme, she offered him her purse and her apartments for the gratification of his wishes. Nero and his friends, however, saw through her arts, and the plan for reducing her power was steadily pursued. Accordingly Pallas was now deprived of his office of treasurer. This again drove her furious; she menaced her son with setting up Britannicus against him, declaring that she would take him to the camp, and as the daughter of Germanicus, appeal to the soldiers against her unworthy son.

Nero now became alarmed; he knew of what his mother was capable, and a late incident* had shown him that Britannicus was not without spirit and was possessed of friends. He therefore resolved to remove him, and for this purpose had a poison procured from Locusta, and administered by those about the youth. It proved however too weak; and the emperor sending for Locusta, beat her with his own hands, and made her prepare a stronger dose, of which he made trial on a kid and a pig till he was satisfied of its efficacy. He then had it brought into the dining-room, and given in some cold water to Britannicus as he sat at dinner. The unhappy youth dropped suddenly dead; Nero said carelessly, that he had been subject to epilepsy from his infancy, and that he would soon recover. Agrippina was struck with terror and consternation, but did not venture to express them. Octavia, young as she was, had learned to conceal her feelings. So after a brief interval of silence the entertainment

* In the Saturnalia, when boys were as usual giving the kingdom by lot, it fell to Nero. As all were then bound to obey his commands, he ordered Britannicus to stand in the middle and sing a song. Britannicus obeyed, but the song he sang was one expressive of his own fate in being cast out from empire and his paternal seat. Tac. An. xiii. 15. This play seems to be the original of our Twelfth-day kings.

was resumed. The body of Britannicus was burnt that very night, the necessary arrangements having been previously made.

To stifle the memory of this atrocious deed, Nero bestowed large gifts on the persons about him of most influence. By many Seneca and Burrus were much blamed for accepting them, while others excused them by the plea of necessity. Nothing however could soften Agrippina; she embraced Octavia; she held secret meetings with her friends; she collected money; she courted the officers of the guards; she treated the remaining nobility with great respect. Nero in return deprived her of the guard of honour which had been hitherto assigned her, appointed a different part of the palace for her residence, and never visited her without a party of centurions.

The enemies of Agrippina were now emboldened to attack her life. Junia Silana*, who had been her intimate friend, irritated by her having been the means of depriving her of an advantageous match, caused two of her clients named Iturius and Calvitiu to accuse her of a design to marry Rubellius Plautus, who was related to Augustus in the same degree that Nero was, and to set him up as his rival for the empire. This information was communicated to Atimetu, a freedman of Domitia, Nero's aunt, who also was at enmity with Agrippina, and he urged Paris the actor, another of her freedmen, to go at once and inform the emperor of the danger that menaced him. Paris hastened to the palace. It was late at night when he arrived. Nero, who had been drinking freely, was dreadfully alarmed at this intelligence. In the first access of his terror he would have had both his mother and Plautus put to death immediately, but he was withheld for the present by the instances of Burrus. In the morning Burrus, Seneca, and some of the freedmen, waited on Agrippina. She treated the charge with disdain, exposed its absurdity, and assigned the motives of its inventors. She insisted on being admitted to an audience of her son, and when she saw him she demanded and she obtained rewards for her friends and vengeance on her enemies. Silana was exiled, Calvitiu and Iturius were relegated, Atimetu was put to death; but Paris was too necessary to the pleasures of the prince to allow of his being punished.

Pallas and Burrus were now accused of a design to set up

* See above, p. 62.

L. Cornelius Sulla, the son-in-law of Claudius. But the charge was so manifestly absurd, that the accuser was sent into exile. A remarkable instance of the pride and insolence of Pallas appeared on this occasion; when the freedmen who were his confidants were named, he replied that in his house he always indicated his wishes by a nod or by a sign of his hand, or if many things were to be expressed, he wrote them down, that he might not mingle his voice with those of his servants.

Little of importance occurred at Rome during the three succeeding years. The matter of most note was the connexion which Nero formed (59) with a lady named Poppæa Sabina. This woman, who, as Tacitus remarks, possessed everything but virtue, was at this time married to M. Salvius Otho, for whom she had quitted her former husband Rufius Crispinus. Otho, who was one of Nero's greatest intimates, could not refrain from boasting frequently before him of the beauty and elegance of his wife. Nero's desires were inflamed; he soon managed to become acquainted with Poppæa, and this artful woman pretended to be captivated with his beauty, but at the same time declared that she was strongly attached to Otho on account of the noble and splendid life which he led, while Nero, the associate of the freedwoman Acte, could not be expected to be anything but mean and servile. This line of conduct succeeded completely; Nero became all her own, and Otho, that he might not be in the way of their amours, was sent out as governor of Lusitania.

It was now that Agrippina was in real danger. Poppæa, whose power over her lover continually increased, knew that as long as his mother lived she could not hope to succeed in making him divorce Octavia and marry herself. She therefore had recourse to her usual arts, calling him a ward, telling him that he did not possess freedom, much less empire; and tauntingly asking him was it on account of her noble ancestors, or her beauty, or her fecundity, or her spirit, that he delayed espousing her, and so forth.

Tacitus relates, on the authority of several writers and of common fame, that Agrippina's desire for the retention of power was such, that she actually sought to seduce her son to the commission of incest, and her design was only prevented by Seneca's making Acte tell the prince that the fame of it was gone abroad, and that the soldiers would not submit to the rule of a profane prince. Others said that the guilty

party was Nero himself, but that he was diverted from his design by Acte, as just related. Nothing we fear is too bad to be believed of either mother or son.

Be the truth as it may, Nero henceforth avoided all occasions of being alone with his mother, and he secretly resolved on her death. The difficulty was how to accomplish it; poison was out of the question against a woman of such caution; a violent death could not be concealed, and he also feared that he could get no one to attempt her life. At length Anicetus, a freedman who commanded the fleet at Misenum, proposed the expedient of a ship which should go to pieces. The prince embraced the idea, and as he was spending the festival of the Quinquatrus at Baiæ (60), he invited his mother, who was at Antium, to visit him there, saying that children should bear with the temper of their parents. He met her as she landed, and conducted her to the villa named Bauli*. Among the vessels lying there was one superior to the others, as if to do her honour. She was invited to proceed in it to Baiæ, but it is said that she had gotten warning, and therefore declined, and proceeded thither in her litter. The caresses of her son however dispelled her suspicions if she had any; the banquet was prolonged into the night, and when she arose to depart the emperor attended her to the shore where she was to embark, and as he was taking leave of her he kissed her eyes and bosom repeatedly, either the more completely to veil his purpose, or possibly from some remnants of the feelings of nature.

The night was starlight—the sea was calm; Agrippina, attended only by one of her servants named Crepereius Gallus and her maid Acerronia, went on board. The vessel had proceeded but a little way, when as Crepereius was standing near the helm and Acerronia was reclining over the feet of her mistress and congratulating her on the recent reconciliation, the deck, which was laden with lead, at a given signal came down on them: Crepereius was killed on the spot; the strength of the sides of the bed saved Agrippina and Acerronia; the ship did not go to pieces as intended. The rowers then attempted to sink it by inclining it to one side, but did not succeed. Acerronia foolishly crying out that *she* was Agrippina, and calling to them to aid the mother of the prince, was despatched

* On the coast between cape Misenum and Baiæ. It had formerly belonged to the orator Hortensius. Cic. Acad. ii. 3; Plin. N. H. ix. 55.

with blows of boat-hooks and oars. Agrippina, who preserved silence, only received a wound in the shoulder, and she floated along till she was picked up by some small boats and conveyed to her villa on the Lucrine lake. She now saw through the whole design of her impious son, but deeming it her wisest course to dissemble, she sent Agerinus, one of her freedmen, to inform him of the escape which the goodness of the gods had vouchsafed her, begging him not to come to visit her as she required repose.

Nero's consternation was extreme when he heard of her escape. He deemed that she would now set no bounds to her vengeance; that she would arm her slaves, and appeal to the soldiers, the senate, and the people against her parricidal son. He summoned Burrus and Seneca to advise him. They both maintained a long silence: at length, Seneca, seeing that either Nero or Agrippina now must fall, looked at Burrus, and asked if a soldier should be ordered to slay her? Burrus replied that the soldiers would not touch the issue of Germanicus, and added that it would be better for Anicetus to go through with what he had commenced. Nero was overjoyed when Anicetus declared his willingness. Just then Agerinus arrived, and as he was delivering his message Nero cast a sword at his feet, and then caused him to be put in chains, that he might be able to say that his mother had sent her freedman to assassinate him, and had killed herself out of shame when she had failed in her design.

When Anicetus arrived at Agrippina's villa he dispersed the crowds which had assembled to congratulate her on her escape. He set a guard round the house, and then with a captain of a galley and a centurion of the marines entered her chamber where she was waiting with extreme anxiety for intelligence. The only maid about her was leaving her: "Do you also desert me?" said she, and looking around she beheld Anicetus. She told him if he came to see her to say that she was recovered; if to perform a crime she would not believe that her son would command the murder of his mother. The captain struck her with a stick on the head; as the centurion was drawing his sword she pointed to her womb, crying out "Strike here"; she was then despatched with several wounds. Such was the termination of the guilty ambition of the highly-gifted daughter of Germanicus. It was said that she had long foreknown her fate, for having one time consulted the astrologers on the future fortunes of her son, they replied that he

would reign, but that he would kill his mother. "Let him kill me," cried she, "provided that he reigns."

Some writers related that Nero came to view the dead body of his mother, and that he criticised the various parts, observing on the whole that he did not think she had been so handsome. Yet conscience asserted its rights; terrific dreams scared him from his couch; the aspect of the smiling shores of the bay of Baiæ became gloomy to his view; imagination heard the wailing of trumpets from the place where the unhonoured ashes of Agrippina lay. Though the officers of the guards at the impulsion of Burrus came to congratulate him on his escape from the treachery of his mother; though his friends and the adjacent towns of Campania wearied heaven with thanksgivings, and the obsequious senate decreed supplications and honours of all kinds, his mind could not find rest, and for years he was haunted by the memory of his murdered parent.

Nero went first to Naples, and having remained some time in Campania, dubious of the reception he might meet with at Rome, he was at length impelled by his flatterers to enter the city boldly. He did so, and found that he had had no just cause for alarm; for senate and people alike, all ages and sexes, vied in servility and adulation. His entrance was like a triumph, and he ascended the Capitol and returned thanks to the gods.

The restraint of his mother being removed, Nero now gave a free course to his idle or vicious propensities. He had always been fond of driving a chariot and of singing to the lyre after his dinner, justifying it by the example of ancient kings and heroes, such as the Homeric Achilles. Seneca and Burrus thought it advisable to humour him in the former propensity, and a space was inclosed in the Vatican valley for his chariot-driving. But he was not contented till the people were admitted to witness and to applaud his skill. In order that the infamy of his exhibitions might be diminished by diffusion, he obliged some of the noblest of both sexes to appear on the stage, the arena, and the circus. He also instituted games called Juvenalia (from his then first shaving), in which, in theatres erected in his gardens, he himself sang and danced; and he forced the nobility of all ages and sexes, without any regard to the honours they had borne, to do the same. A lady, for example, named Ælia Catella, rich and noble, and eighty years of age, was thus obliged to dance in public! He finally appeared on the public stage, and the lord of the Ro-

man world was seen to come forward lyre in hand, wearing a long trailing robe, and having addressed the audience in the usual form, ("Gentlemen, hear me with favour,") sing to his chords the story of Attis or the Bacchæ. The officers of the guards stood around, Burrus grieving and applauding. Nero further selected five thousand young men, named Augustans, who were divided into companies, whose task was to applaud him when he was singing.

The death of Burrus (63), which some ascribed to poison, removed another check from the vices of Nero. The command of the guards was again divided; Fenius Rufus, an honest but inactive officer, being joined in it with Sofonius Tigellinus, a man polluted by every vice, but whom similarity of manners had recommended to the favour of the prince. Seneca, finding his influence reduced by the death of Burrus, and himself marked as the object of attack by the base minions of the court, craved an audience of the prince, and requested to be allowed to restore all the possessions which he had bestowed on him, and permitted to retire into the shades of private life. But Nero, accomplished in hypocrisy, made the most affectionate objections, would not hear of his retirement, and lavished caresses on him. Seneca returned thanks and retired, but he altered his mode of life, and henceforth avoided publicity as much as possible.

Cornelius Sulla and Rubellius Plautus were both objects of alarm to Nero; he had therefore removed them from the city; and the former resided in Gaul, the latter in Asia. But Tigellinus now pretending extreme solicitude for the safety of the prince, and exaggerating the dangers to be apprehended from those noblemen, obtained permission to murder them. Sulla therefore was slain as he was sitting at dinner at Marseilles, and Plautus as he was engaged in gymnastic exercises. Their heads were brought to Nero, who mocked at the first as grey before his time, and observed of the second, that he was not aware of his having had so large a nose. He moreover, when he saw the head of Plautus, cried out, that now he might venture to put away Octavia, blameless and loved of the people as she was, and espouse his dear Poppæa. Accordingly, having informed the senate of the deaths of Sulla and Plautus and finding that supplications and so forth were decreed without hesitation, he judged that he had nothing to apprehend from that spiritless assembly; he therefore at once put away Octavia on the pretence of sterility, and married Poppæa, who then attempted to

convict Octavia of an intrigue with a flute-player named Eucerus. But the noble constancy of the greater part of that lady's female slaves, whom all the tortures of the rack could not induce to testify falsely against their mistress, defeated the iniquitous project. The murmurs of the populace soon obliged Nero to take back Octavia, and the public joy was manifested in the most signal manner; the statues of Poppæa were flung down, and those of Octavia were carried about covered with flowers, and placed in the temples. Poppæa, now seriously alarmed for her safety, exerted all her influence over Nero, and he obliged the notorious Anicetus to confess a criminal intercourse with Octavia. Pretending then that her object had been to gain over the fleet, he caused her to be confined in the fatal isle of Pandataria, and a few days after, orders were sent for her death. The poor young woman, to whom, though only in her twenty-second year, life had ceased to yield any pleasure, still feared to die; but she was bound, her veins were opened, and she was placed in a warm bath. When life was extinct, her head was cut off and brought to Poppæa. Thanks to the gods were of course decreed by the senate*.

The murder of Octavia was succeeded by the deaths (by poison as was believed) of Pallas and some of the other freedmen. The crime of Pallas was his detaining, by living too long, his immense wealth from the covetous prince.

At length (64), to his excessive joy, Nero became a father, Poppæa being delivered of a daughter at Antium, the place of his own birth. The senate, who had already commended the womb of Poppæa to the gods, now decreed to her and the infant the title of Augusta; supplications, temples, games and all other honours were voted; and when the baby died, in its fourth month, it was deified by the obsequious and impious assembly, and a temple and priest were voted to it.

Hitherto Nero had confined the exercise of his scenic powers to his palace and gardens; but he longed for a more ample field of display. He would not yet, however, venture to insult the prejudices and feelings of the people by appearing on the stage openly at Rome, and he therefore selected Naples, as a Grecian city, for the place in which he would make his *début* in public, intending then to pass over to Greece and contend

* "Quod ad eum finem memoravimus," says Tacitus, "ut quicumque casus temporum illorum, nobis vel aliis auctoribus, noscent, præsumptum habeant, quotiens fugas et cædes jussit princeps, totiens grates deis actas, quæque rerum secundarum olim tum publicæ cladis insignia fuisse,"

at all the great games of that country, and thus overcome the prejudices of the Romans. He accordingly appeared (65) before a large audience in the theatre of Naples, and even the shock of an earthquake, which rocked the building, did not prevent him from finishing his piece. Instead, however, of proceeding directly to Greece, he returned to Rome, and there, declaring that his absence would not be long, he ascended the Capitol and prayed to the gods for the success of his journey; he thence proceeded to the temple of Vesta, but when he entered it he was seized with a violent tremor in all his limbs (the effect probably of the stings of conscience), and he gave up his design for the present; to the great joy of the populace, who feared a scarcity of corn in his absence: to the senate and nobles it was uncertain whether his absence or his presence was the more to be dreaded.

To prove to the people that he preferred Rome to all other places, he made the whole city as it were his house, and held his banquets in the public places. Historians have deemed one of these, given by Tigellinus, deserving of memory. The scene was the pond of Agrippa in the Campus Martius. The banquet, composed of rarities from all parts of the earth, was spread on a raft, which was towed about by boats rowed by youths of prostituted virtue; on the margin of the pond stood brothels filled with women of noble birth obliged to receive all comers, and also with naked courtezans, and when night came, the surrounding groves and edifices shone bright with numerous lights and resounded with song and revelry. A few days after, that he might leave no kind of infamy untried, Nero became the bride of Pythagoras, one of that contaminated crew. The emperor wore the yellow veil, the Auspices were present, the portion, genial bed and nuptial torches were there, and things were done openly, which even in the case of a woman are shrouded by the veil of night.

Rome was at this time visited by a calamity worse than any that had befallen her since she was a city. On the 19th of July a fire broke out in a part of the Circus which was full of shops containing inflammable substances. The flames spread rapidly, the wind accelerating their career. It was not till the sixth day, that by pulling down houses the course of the conflagration was stopped at the foot of the Esquiline. The loss of lives and property was immense: of the fourteen quarters into which the city was divided, four only escaped; three were totally destroyed, and of the other seven but little remained standing.



Nero, who was at Antium, did not return till he heard that the flames were spreading to his palace; but when he arrived he was unable to save it. He threw open his gardens, the Campus Martius, and the monuments of Agrippa to the sufferers; he caused supplies of all kinds to be fetched from Antium and other places, and he reduced the price of corn considerably. All he could do, however, would not remove the suspicion that the city had been fired by his own orders. It was said that he longed for an opportunity of rebuilding it with more of regularity and beauty, and it was asserted that while the fire was raging he ascended a tower in the gardens of Mæcenas in his scenic dress, and, charmed with what he termed "the beauty of the flame," sang to his lyre *The Taking of Ilium*. He caused the Sibylline books to be consulted, and in obedience to them supplications to be made to various deities; he spared no expense in the rebuilding of the city; and when all would not avail to clear him, he laid the guilt on the innocent. The members of the society named Christians, which had arisen some years before in Judæa, were now numerous at Rome. From causes which we will hereafter assign, they were objects of general aversion, and any charge against them was likely to gain credit. Some of them were seized and forced to confess; on their evidence, a great multitude of others were taken and condemned. They were put to death with torture and insult, some being sewed up in the skins of wild beasts and then torn to pieces by dogs, some crucified, and others wrapped in pitch and other inflammable materials and set on fire to serve for lamps in the night. The scene of their agonies was Nero's gardens*, and he at the same time, to please the populace, gave Circensian games, driving about the city in the dress of a charioteer. Still the sufferers, though believed to be guilty of crimes, were pitied, as the victims of the real criminal.

The city was rebuilt (at the heavy cost of Italy and the provinces) with more of regularity and beauty than it had ever before possessed. Many however complained of the width of the streets, as when narrow they had afforded more of shade and coolness. But the great object of Nero's ambition was to rebuild his palace on a scale of unexampled magnificence. He had already extended it from the Palatine to the Esquiline, and it was thence called the *Transitory-house*; the new one was named the *Golden-house*, from the quantity of gold and

* In the Vatican valley. The site is now occupied by St. Peter's church and the piazza before it.

precious stones employed in it. It covered an immense extent of ground on the Palatine and Esquiline, containing within its bounds woods, plains, vineyards, ponds, with animals both wild and tame, and a great variety of buildings. The numerous dining-rooms were ceiled with ivory plates, which were moveable, to shower down flowers, and perforated, to sprinkle odours on the guests. The principal one was round, and made to revolve day and night, in imitation of the world. The baths were supplied with water from the sea and from the river Albula. When the whole was completed, Nero observed that at length he had begun to dwell like a man.

Men however were grown weary of being the objects of the tyrannic caprice of a profligate youth, and a widely-extended conspiracy to remove him and give the supreme power to C. Piso, a nobleman of many popular qualities, was organised (66). Men of all ranks, civil and military, were engaged in it,—senators, knights, tribunes, and centurions,—some, as is usual, on public, some on private grounds. While they were yet undecided where it were best to fall on Nero, a courtesan named Epicharis, who had a knowledge (it is not known how obtained) of the plot, wearied of their indecision, attempted to gain over the officers of the fleet at Misenum. She made the first trial of an officer named Volusius Proculus, who had been one of the agents in the murder of Agrippina, and who complained of the ill return he had met with, and menaced revenge. She communicated to him the fact of there being a conspiracy, and proposed to him to join in it; but Proculus, hoping to gain a reward by this new service, went and gave information to Nero. Epicharis was seized; but as she had mentioned no names, and Proculus had no witnesses, nothing could be made of the matter. She was however kept in prison.

The conspirators became alarmed; and lest they should be betrayed, they resolved to delay acting no longer, but to fall on the tyrant at the Circensian games. The plan arranged was that Plautius Lateranus, the consul-elect, a man of great courage and bodily strength, should sue to the emperor for relief to his family affairs, and in so doing should grasp his knees and throw him down, and that then the officers should despatch him with their swords. Meantime Piso should be waiting at the adjacent temple of Ceres, and when Nero was no more, the præfect Fenius Rufus and others should come and convey him to the camp.

Notwithstanding the number and variety of persons en-

gaged in the plot, the secret had been kept with wonderful fidelity. Accident however revealed it as it was on the very eve of execution. Among the conspirators was a senator named Flavius Scevinus, who though dissolved in luxury was one of the most eager. He had insisted on having the first part in the assassination, for which purpose he had provided a dagger taken from a temple. The night before the attack was to be made he gave this dagger to one of his freedmen, named Milichus, to grind and sharpen. He at the same time sealed his will, giving freedom to some, gifts to others of his slaves. He supped more luxuriously than usual, and though he affected great cheerfulness, it was manifest from his air that he had something of importance on his mind. He also directed his freedman to prepare bandages for wounds. The freedman, who was either already in the secret, or had his suspicions now excited, consulted with his wife, and at her impulsion set off at daylight and revealed his suspicions to Epaphroditus, one of Nero's freedmen, by whom he was conducted to the emperor. On his information Scevinus was arrested; but he gave a plausible explanation of everything but the bandages, which he positively denied. He might have escaped were it not that Milichus' wife suggested that Antonius Natalis had conversed a great deal with him in secret of late, and that they were both intimate with Piso. Natalis was then sent for, and as he and Scevinus did not agree in their accounts of the conversation which they had, they were menaced with torture. Natalis' courage gave way; and he named Piso and Seneca. Scevinus then, either through weakness, or thinking that all was known, named several others, among whom were Annæus Lucanus, the poet, the nephew of Seneca, Tullius Senecio, and Afranius Quinctianus. These at first denied everything; at length on the promise of pardon they discovered some of their nearest friends, Lucan even naming his own mother Atilla.

Nero now called to mind the information of Proculus, and he ordered Epicharis to be put to the torture. But no pain could overcome the constancy of the heroic woman; and next day, as from her weak state she was carried in a chair to undergo the torture anew, she contrived to fasten her belt to the arched back of the chair, and thus to strangle herself.

When the discovery was first made, some of the bolder spirits urged Piso to hasten to the camp or to ascend the *Rosstra*, and endeavour to excite the soldiers or the people to rise against Nero. But he had not energy for such a course, and

he lingered at home till his house was surrounded by the soldiers sent to take him. He then opened his veins, leaving a will filled, for the sake of his wife, a profligate woman, with the grossest adulation of Nero. Lateranus died like a hero, with profound silence; and though the tribune who presided at the execution was one of the conspirators, he never reproached him.

But the object of Nero's most deadly enmity was Seneca. All that was against this illustrious man was that Natalis said that Piso had one time sent him to Seneca, who was ill, to see how he was, and to complain of his not admitting him, and that Seneca replied that "it was for the good of neither that they should meet frequently, but that his health depended on Piso's safety." The tribune Granius Silvanus (also one of the conspirators) was sent to Seneca, who was now at his villa four miles from Rome, to examine him respecting the conversation with Natalis. He found him at table with his wife Pompeia Paulina, and two of his friends. Seneca's account agreed with that of Natalis; his meaning, he said, had been perfectly innocent. When the tribune made his report to Nero and his privy-council—Poppæa and Tigellinus, he was asked if Seneca meditated a voluntary death? On his reply, that he showed no signs of fear or perturbation, he was ordered to go back and bid him die. Silvanus, it is said, called on Fenius on his way and asked him if he should obey the orders; but Fenius, with that want of spirit which was the ruin of them all, bade him obey. Silvanus when he arrived sent in a centurion with the fatal mandate.

Seneca calmly called for his will, but the centurion would not suffer him to have it. He then told his friends that as he could not express his sense of their merits in the way that he wished, he would leave them the image of his life, to which if they attended they would obtain the fame of virtue and of constancy in friendship. He checked their tears, showing that nothing had occurred but what was to have been expected. Then embracing his wife he began to console and fortify her, but she declared her resolution to die with him. Not displeased at her generous devotion, and happy that one so dear to him should not remain exposed to injury and misfortune, he gave a ready consent, and the veins in the arms of both were opened. As Seneca, on account of his age, bled slowly, he caused those of his legs and thighs to be opened also; and as he suffered very much he persuaded his wife to go into another room; and then calling for amanuenses, he dictated a

discourse which was afterwards published. Finding himself going very slowly, he asked his friend, the physician, Statilius Annæus, for the hemlock-juice which he had provided, and took it, but it had no effect. He finally went into a warm bath, sprinkling as he entered it the servants who were about him, and saying, "I pour this liquor to Jove the Liberator." The heat caused the blood to flow freely; and his sufferings at length terminated. His body was burnt without any ceremony, according to the directions which he had given when at the height of his prosperity.

Paulina did not die at this time; for Nero, who had no enmity against her and wished to avoid the imputation of gratuitous cruelty, sent orders to have her saved. She survived her husband a few years, her face and skin remaining of a deadly paleness in consequence of her great loss of blood.

The military men did not remain undiscovered. Fenius Rufus died like a coward; the tribunes and centurions, like soldiers. When one of them named Subrius Flavius was asked by Nero what caused him to forget his military oath,—“I hated you,” said he, “and there was none of the soldiers more faithful while you deserved to be loved. I began to hate you when you became the murderer of your mother and wife, a chariot-driver, a player and an incendiary.” Nothing in the whole affair cut Nero to the soul like this reply of the gallant soldier.

The consul Vestinus was not implicated by any in the conspiracy; but Nero hated him; and as he was sitting at dinner with his friends, some soldiers entered to say that their tribune wanted him. He arose, went into a chamber, had his veins opened, entered a warm bath, and died. Lucan when ordered to die had his veins also opened; when he felt his extremities growing cold, he called to mind some verses of his *Pharsalia* which were applicable to his case, and died repeating them*. Senecio Quinctianus and Scevinius and many others died; several were banished. Natalis, Milichus and others were rewarded; offerings, thanksgivings and so forth were voted in abundance by the senate.

This obsequious body however sought to avert the disgrace of the lord of the Roman world appearing on the stage at the approaching Quinquennial games, by offering him the victory of song and the crown of eloquence. But

* They are supposed by Lipsius to be iii. 638–646, by Vertranus ix. 806–814. Lipsius is in our opinion right.

Nero said that there needed not the power nor the influence of the senate, that he feared not his rivals, and relied on the equity of the judges. He therefore sang on the stage, and when the people pressed him to display all his acquirements, he came forth in the theatre, strictly conforming to all the rules of his art, not sitting down when weary, wiping his face in his robe, neither spitting nor blowing his nose, and finally with bended knee and moving his hand, waited in counterfeit terror for the sentence of the judges.

At the end of the games, in a fit of anger he gave Poppæa, who was pregnant, a kick in the stomach, which caused her death. Instead of burning her body, as was now the general custom, he had it embalmed with the most costly spices and deposited in the monument of the Julian family. He himself pronounced the funeral oration, in which he praised her for her beauty*, and for being the mother of a divine infant.

The remainder of the year was marked by the deaths or exile of several illustrious persons, and by a pestilence which carried off great numbers of all ranks and ages. "Of the knights and senators," observes Tacitus, "the deaths were less to be lamented; they anticipated as it were by the common fate the cruelty of the prince."

The first deaths of the succeeding year (67), were those of P. Antei-us, whose crime was his wealth and the friendship of Agrippina; Ostorius Scapula, who had distinguished himself in Britain; Annæus Mella, the father of Lucan; Anicius Cerealis, Rufius Crispinus and others. They all died in the same manner, by opening their veins. The most remarkable death was that of C. Petronius, a man whose elegance and taste in luxury had recommended him to the special favour of Nero, who regarding him as his 'arbiter of elegance,' valued only that of which Petronius approved. The envy of Tigellinus being thus excited, he bribed one of Petronius' slaves to charge his master with being the friend of Scevius. His death followed of course; the mode of it however was peculiar. He caused his veins to be opened, then closed, then opened again, and so on. He meantime went on conversing with his friends, not, like a Socrates or a Seneca, on the immortality of the soul or the opinions of the wise, but listening to light and wanton verses. He re-

* Poppæa was so solicitous about her beauty, that she used to bathe every day in the milk of 500 she-asses, which she kept for the purpose. Plin. N. H. xi. 41. Dion, lxi. 28.

warded some of his slaves, he had others flogged, he dined, he slept, he made, in short, his compulsive death as like a natural one as possible. He did not, like others, pay court to Nero or Tigellinus or the men in power, in his will, but he wrote an account of the vices and crimes of the prince and court under the names of flagitious men and women, and sent it sealed up to the emperor. He broke his seal-ring, lest it might be used to the destruction of innocent persons.

"After the slaughter of so many illustrious men," says Tacitus, "Nero at length sought to destroy virtue itself by killing Thraseas Pætus and Bareas Soranus." The former, a man of primitive Roman virtue, was hated by him not merely for his worth, but because he had on various occasions given public proof of his disapproval of his acts. Such were his going out of the senate-house when the decrees were made on account of the murder of Agrippina, and his absence from the deification and funeral of Poppæa. Further than his virtue, we know of no cause of enmity that Nero could have against Soranus.

The accusers of Thraseas were Capito Cossutianus, whom he had made his enemy by supporting the Cilician deputies who came to accuse him of extortion, and Marcellus Eprinus, a profligate man of eloquence. A Roman knight named Ostorius Sabinus appeared as the accuser of Soranus. The time selected for the destruction of these eminent men was that of the arrival of the Parthian prince Tiridates, who was coming to Rome to receive the diadem of Armenia, either in hopes that the domestic crime would be shrouded by the foreign glory, or, more probably, to give the Oriental an idea of the imperial power. Thraseas received an order not to appear among those who went to meet the king; he wrote to Nero, requiring to know with what he was charged, and asserting his ability to clear himself if he got an opportunity. Nero in reply said that he would convoke the senate. Thraseas then consulted with his friends, whether he should go to the senate-house, or expect his doom at home. Opinions were as usual divided, he however did not go to the senate.

Next morning the temple in which the senate sat was surrounded with soldiery. Cossutianus and Eprinus appeared as the accusers of Thraseas, his son-in-law Helvidius Priscus, Paconius Agrippinus and Curtius Montanus. The general charge against them was passive rather than active disloyalty, Thraseas being held forth as the seducer and encourager of

the others. Ostorius then came forward and accused Soranus, who was present, of friendship with Rubellius Plautus and of mal-conduct in the government of Asia. He added, that Servilia, the daughter of the accused, had given money to fortune-tellers. Servilia was summoned. She owned the truth, that she had sold her ornaments and given the money to the soothsayers, but for no impious purpose, only to learn if her father would escape. Witnesses were then called, and among them, to the indignation of every virtuous man, appeared P. Egnatius the client and friend of Soranus, and a professor of the stoic philosophy, who now had sold himself to destroy his benefactor by false testimony.

The accused were all condemned, of course; Thræseas, Soranus and Servilia to death, the others to exile. Of the circumstances of the end of Soranus and his daughter, we are not informed. Thræseas having prevented his wife Arria from following the example of her mother of the same name, by entreating her not to deprive their daughter of her only remaining support, caused his veins to be opened in the usual manner; and as the blood spouted forth, he said to the quæstor who was present, "Let us pour out to Jove the Liberator. Regard this, young man. May the gods avert the omen; but you have been born in times when it is expedient to fortify the mind by examples of constancy." He died after suffering much pain.

These sanguinary deeds were succeeded by the splendid ceremony of giving the diadem of Armenia to Tiridates. The scene was the Forum, which was filled during the night by the people arranged in order, wearing white *togas* and bearing laurel, while one part of it was occupied by the soldiers brilliantly armed. The roofs of the houses also were thronged with spectators. At day-break, Nero in a triumphal robe, followed by the senate and his guards, entered the Forum and took his seat on his tribunal. Tiridates and his attendants then advanced through the lines of soldiery. An immense shout was raised when he appeared; he was filled with terror; but when silence was restored, he went forward and addressed the prince. Nero made a suitable reply, and inviting him up and making him sit at his foot, placed the diadem on his head, while the shouts of the multitude filled the air.

This Tiridates was the brother of the Parthian king Vologeses. In the first year of Nero's reign, as this prince had

occupied the throne of Armenia, the conduct of the war, which it was resolved to undertake against him, was committed to Domitius Corbulo, a man of great military talent and experience. The war, which was of the usual kind between Europeans and Asiatics, in which the advantage of skill and discipline is on the side of the former, that of numbers and knowledge of the country on that of the latter, had been carried on with various success, till at length an arrangement was effected by Corbulo's agreeing that Tiridates should be king of Armenia on condition of his acknowledging the supremacy of Rome, and receiving his diadem from the hands of the emperor.

Nothing of importance occurred in the time of Nero on the frontiers of the Rhine and Danube. In Britain, Suetonius Paulinus conquered the isle of Mona, the great seat of the Druidic religion; and a war headed by Boadicea queen of the Icenians, which commenced by the massacre of two Roman colonies, was terminated with a prodigious slaughter of the Britons.

At length Nero put his long-cherished design of visiting Greece into execution. Leaving his freedman Helius with unlimited power in Rome, he crossed the Adriatic at the head of a body of men, numerous enough as to mere numbers, it was said, to conquer the Parthians; but of whom the greater part were armed with lyres, masks and theatric buskins. He contended at all the games of Greece, for he made them all be celebrated in the one year. When contending he rigidly followed all the rules and practices of the citharœdic art; he addressed the judges with fear and reverence; he openly abused or secretly maligned his rivals. The Greeks, adepts in flattery, bestowed on him all the prizes; and even when at the Olympic games he attempted to drive ten-in-hand and was thrown from the chariot, he still was proclaimed victor. In return, he bestowed liberty on the whole province, and gave the judges the rights of citizenship and a large sum of money. This, in imitation of Flamininus, he himself proclaimed aloud from the middle of the stadium at the Isthmian games. These amusements however gave no check to the cruelty and rapacity of himself and Tigellinus. Greece was plundered as by an enemy, numbers were put to death for their property; many persons were even summoned thither from Italy and other parts for the sole purpose of being executed. Among these was the gallant Corbulo, whom

Nero lured thither by the most hypocritical expressions of affection, and ordered to be slain as soon as he landed. Corbulo took a sword and plunged it into his body, crying, "I deserve it."

While in Greece, Nero celebrated another marriage. The bride on this occasion was a youth named Sporus, who, it is said, bore some resemblance to Poppæa. Having emasculated him, and essayed all the powers of art to convert him into a woman, he espoused him with the most solemn forms, Tigellinus acting as the bride's father on the occasion. He henceforth had him dressed as his empress and carried about with him in a litter. Some one observed that "it had been well for the world if his father Domitius had had such a wife." He also while in Greece attempted to dig a canal through the Isthmus, for which purpose he assembled a great number of workmen from all parts. When from superstitious motives they hesitated to touch the ground which was sacred to the sea-god, he took a spade and set them the example himself. The project, however, owing to subsequent events, came to nothing.

Helius had for some time been urging the emperor by letters to return to Rome on account of the aspect of affairs there. Finding his letters unheeded, he came over in person; and on his representations, Nero saw the necessity of leaving Greece. When he landed in Italy, he proceeded to Naples, the scene of his first musical glory. He entered it in a chariot drawn by white horses, and through a breach in the walls, as was the custom of victors in the public games. He did the same at Antium, Albanum and Rome itself. He entered this last city in the triumphal car of Augustus, wearing a purple robe studded with silver stars, the Olympic wreath of wild-olive on his head, the Pythian laurel in his hand. The crowns which he had won, and boards showing the names and forms of the places where he had gained them, preceded his chariot; the senate, knights and soldiers followed, shouting "Olympic victor! Pythian victor! Augustus! Nero Hercules! Nero Apollo!" and such like. In this manner he proceeded to the Capitol, and thence to the palace. The crowns, eighteen hundred in number, were hung round an Egyptian obelisk. Nero then resumed his former occupations as a player and charioteer.

The Roman world had thus long submitted to be the sport of a monster in human form; but the day of vengeance was

at hand. We are ill-informed of the circumstances and nature of the revolt against him (68); we are only told that its author was C. Julius Vindex, a man of high birth in Aquitanian Gaul, whose father had been a Roman senator, and who was himself at this time *proprætor* of Gaul. As the people were harassed beyond endurance by exactions, he proposed to them to have recourse to arms and deprive the unworthy wretch, under whose tyranny they groaned, of the power to oppress the Roman world any longer. Vindex was too prudent a man to set himself up as the rival of Nero; he proposed that the empire should be offered to Ser. Sulpicius Galba, the governor of Tarragonian Spain, a man of high character, of much military experience, and who was at the head of a large army. Deputies were accordingly sent to Galba, to whom Vindex also wrote, strongly urging him to become the deliverer and leader of the human race. Galba, who had discovered that Nero had resolved on his death, and whom favourable signs and omens encouraged, called his soldiers together, and placing before his tribunal the images of a great number of persons whom Nero had put to death, deplored the condition of the times. The soldiers instantly saluted him emperor; he however cautiously professed himself to be merely the legate of the Roman senate and people, and forthwith commenced his levies. He formed a kind of senate of the leading persons in the country, and selected a body of youths of the equestrian order to act as his body-guard.

Meantime Verginius Rufus, who commanded in Germany, when he heard of the insurrection in Gaul, advanced and laid siege to Besançon. Vindex came to its relief, and having encamped at a little distance, he and Verginius had a private meeting, in which it was suspected that they agreed to unite against Nero; but shortly after as Vindex was leading his forces toward the town, the Roman legions attacked them, without orders as was said, and slew twenty thousand of them. Vindex also fell by their swords, or, as was more generally believed, by his own hand. The soldiers would fain have saluted Verginius emperor; but that noble-minded man steadfastly refused the honour, affirming that the senate and people alone had a right to confer it*.

Nero was at Naples when intelligence reached him of the

* Verginius caused the following lines to be placed on his tomb (Plin. Ep. vi. 10.): "Hic situs est Rufus, pulso qui Vindice quondam, Imperium asseruit non sibi, sed patriæ."

insurrection in Gaul. He made so light of it that some thought he was rejoiced at the occasion which it was likely to offer for plundering those wealthy provinces. During eight days he took his ordinary amusements. At length, stung by the contumelious edicts of Vindex, he wrote to the senate excusing his absence on account of the soreness of his throat, as if, observes the historian, he was to have sung for them; and when he came to Rome he assembled the principal men of both orders, but instead of deliberating with them on the affairs of Gaul, he spent the time in explaining some improvements which he had made in the hydraulic organ, adding that he would shortly produce it in the theatre, if Vindex would allow him.

When however he heard of the revolt of Galba and the Spains, his consternation was extreme. He revolved, it is said, the wildest and most nefarious projects, such as sending persons to kill all the governors of provinces, massacring the exiles and all the Gauls that were at Rome, poisoning the senate, setting fire to the city, and letting the wild beasts loose on the people. He began to levy troops; but his first care was to provide carriages to convey his theatric properties, and to dress and arm a party of his concubines as Amazons to form his guard. The Urban cohorts having refused to serve, he called on all masters to furnish a certain number of their slaves, and he took care to select the most valuable, not even excepting the stewards or amanuenses. He likewise required all persons to give him a part of their property.

Intelligence of further revolts having reached him as he was at dinner, he overturned in his terror the table and broke his two precious Homeric cups, as they were named, from the scenes from Homer which were carved on them. Taking then with him in a golden box some poison prepared for him by Locusta, he went to the Servilian gardens and sent some of his most faithful freedmen to Ostia to get shipping ready. He then tried to prevail on the officers of the guards to accompany his flight, but some excused themselves, others refused, and one even repeated the line of Virgil, *Usque adeone mori miserum est?* One time he thought of flying to the Parthians, another time to Galba, then of ascending the Rostra and asking public pardon for his transgressions and praying for even the government of Egypt. He retired to rest; but awaking in the middle of the night and finding that his guards had left him, he sprang up and sent for some of his friends. When none came, he arose and went to their houses, but every

door was closed against him. On his return he found his bed-chamber pillaged, and his box of poison gone. He sought in vain for some one to kill him. "Have I neither a friend nor an enemy?" cried he, and rushed to the Tiber to throw himself in it. His courage however failed him, and his freedman Phaon having offered a country-house which he had four miles from the city* for a retreat, he mounted a horse, and set out with Sporus and three others, concealed in a dark cloak, with his head covered and a handkerchief before his face. As he was quitting the city the ground seemed to rock beneath him and a broad flash of lightning struck terror to his heart, and as he passed the prætorian camp his ears were assailed by the shouts of the soldiers execrating him and wishing success to Galba. "There they go in pursuit of Nero," observed one of those whom they met; another inquired of them if there was any news of Nero in the city. His horse starting in the road, his handkerchief fell, and he was recognised and saluted by a prætorian soldier. They had to quit their horses and scramble through a thicket to get to the rear of Phaon's villa, and then to wait till an aperture was made in the wall to admit them. Phaon urged him to conceal himself meantime in a sandhole, but he replied that he would not bury himself alive, and taking some water up in his hand from a pool to quench his thirst, he said "This is Nero's prepared water†." He then picked the thorns out of his cloak, and when the aperture was completed he crept through it and lay down on a miserable pallet in a slave's cell. Though suffering from hunger he would not eat the coarse bread that was offered him, but he drank some warm water.

Every one now urged him to lose no time in saving himself from the impending insults. He directed them to dig a grave on the spot and to prepare the requisite water and wood for his funeral: meantime he continued weeping and saying "What an artist is lost!" A messenger coming with letters to Phaon, he took them, and reading that he was declared an enemy by the senate and sentenced to be punished *more majorum*, he inquired what that meant? Being told that it was to be stripped naked, have the head placed in a fork and be scourged to death, he took two daggers he had with him and tried their

* On the other side of the Anio beyond the Sacred Mount.

† *Decocta*. Nero is said to have introduced the practice of boiling water and then cooling it in snow to give it a greater degree of cold.—Plin. N. H. xxxi. 3.

edge, then sheathed them again, saying that the fatal hour was not yet come. One moment he desired Sporus to begin the funeral wail, then he called on some one to set him an example of dying, then he upbraided his own cowardice. At length, hearing the trampling of the horses of those sent to take him, he hurriedly repeated an appropriate line from Homer, and placing a dagger at his throat, with the aid of his secretary Epaphroditus, drove it in. A centurion entering before he was dead put his cloak to the wound, pretending that he was come to his aid. "Tis too late! Is this your fidelity?" said the bleeding tyrant, and expired.

Such was the well-merited end of the emperor Nero in the thirty-first year of his age and the fourteenth of his reign. We have not ventured to pollute our pages with the appalling details of his lusts and vices, which historians have transmitted to us; for by so doing we should injure rather than serve the cause of moral purity and of virtue. Monster however as he was, the populace and the prætorian soldiery, missing the gifts and the shows which he used to bestow on them, soon began to regret him, and for many years his tomb continued to be visited and his memory to be held in honour. No more convincing proof could be given of the utter degradation of the Roman people.

On looking through the reigns of the four immediate successors of Augustus, one cannot fail to be struck with the singular failure of all the projects of that prince for securing the happiness of the Roman world. It can hardly be deemed fortuitous that such monsters should have attained to unlimited power, and those should not be regarded as superstitious who see in this event a fulfilment of that great law of the moral world, the visitation on the children of the sins and errors of the parents. The Roman nobles had in the last century of the republic robbed and oppressed the people of the provinces in the most nefarious manner*, and by their civil contentions at home they had demoralised the people and caused the downfall of public liberty; their descendants were therefore the victims of the most capricious and merciless of tyrannies, against which neither virtue nor innocence was a security. For we may observe that with slight exceptions it was solely against the noble and wealthy that the cruelties of the emperors were directed.

* The Verrine orations of Cicero are an eternal monument of their infamy.

The whole of the people of Rome, we may say nobles and plebeians alike, were debased and degraded. Though we may not place implicit faith in the exaggerated statements of the declaimers and satirists of the time, we yet must recognise the foundation of truth on which their exaggerations rest. The nobles were sunk in luxury and sensuality to a degree rarely equaled. Vice, unrestrained by that regard to appearance and public opinion which acts as so salutary a check in modern times, reigned in their splendid mansions and boldly affronted the public view. Still all were not equally debased. In the history of the times, we meet with many splendid examples of virtue, and had we the records of private life we should probably find much to flatter our more exalted views of human nature. They in general cultivated literature. The rigid precepts of the Stoic doctrine were adopted by those of more lofty aspirations; the votaries of sensual enjoyment professed the degenerated system of Epicurus.

The common people, now sunk into the condition of mere *lazzaroni*, living on the bounty or charity of the sovereign, and utterly destitute of even the semblance of political power, thought only of the public games*, and contended with more passion for the success of the blue or green faction of the Circus than their forefathers had shown for the elevation of a Scipio or a Marius to the highest dignities of the state. They were also completely brutalised by the constant view of the slaughter of gladiators, the combats of men with the wild beasts to which they were exposed, and the massacre of animals, many brought for the purpose from the most distant regions, in the amphitheatre. For such were the amusements with which the emperors, continuing in truth only the usage of the commonwealth, sought to gratify the populace of Rome.

The fine rural population of Italy, the hardy yeomanry and stout farm-labourers whose vigour and courage had won the victories which gave Rome her empire, had been greatly diminished. Tillage had ceased in a great measure; and Italy, divided into huge estates, the *latifundia* of the nobles, contained only vineyards, oliveyards, pastures and forests, in which all the labour was performed by gangs of slaves†. The

* "Ex quo suffragia nulli
Vendimus effudit curas; nam qui dabat olim
Imperium, fasces, legiones, omnia, nunc se
Continet, atque duas tantum res anxius optat,
Panem et Circenses."—Juv. Sat. x. 77.

† Columella, i. 3.

corn which was to relieve the wants of the imperial city was all supplied by Africa and Egypt; the existence of the Roman people was at the mercy of the winds, and any one who could obtain the possession even of Egypt* might hope to starve the capital. In every point of view this policy was bad; it should be the object of every prudent government to maintain a sound agricultural population; and no great nation should ever suffer itself to become dependent for its food on the selfishness or caprice of strangers.

Literature had greatly declined after the time of Augustus. The only historian of any note remaining from this period is C. Velleius Paterculus, an agreeable and ingenious writer, but the courtly flatterer of the tyrant Tiberius. The philosophic writings of Seneca display a pure morality conveyed in a style affected and epigrammatic, which, attractive from its very faults, operated very injuriously on the literature of the age. Of the actions of Seneca we have had occasion to speak in the preceding pages; and it is clear that his life did not strictly correspond with the high-strained principles of the Stoic philosophy which he professed. He is accused by Dion of having caused the insurrection of the Britons in the reign of Nero by his avarice, and that historian hints that the charge of adultery against him was not without foundation. On the other hand, Tacitus always speaks of him with great respect. Seneca, in effect, as he himself frequently confesses, had the failings of a man; he was rich, he increased his wealth in the ordinary Roman manner by putting his money out at interest in the provinces; he lived in a splendid manner; but he was moderate and temperate in his habits, and kind and amiable in all the relations of private life, and we should not hesitate to regard him as a good man. The unfortunate circumstances under which he was placed with respect to his imperial pupil, may plead his excuse for such of his public acts as are morally objectionable.

Of the poets of this period we possess only two, M. Annæus Lucanus, the nephew of Seneca, and A. Persius Flaccus. Both of these poets embraced the Stoic philosophy, and both died young. Lucan, following the example of Ennius, sought the materials of a narrative poem in the history of Rome. But his subject, the war between Cæsar and Pompeius, was too recent an event, and the poet was therefore impeded in his

* See Tac. Ann. ii. 59.

efforts by the restrictions of truth. The *Pharsalia*, consequently, though full of vigour and spirit, is rhetorical rather than poetical, and we meet in it the severe truths of history and the strict precepts of philosophy, instead of the beguiling illusions of fiction, the proper ornaments of poetry.

Persius has left six satires written in a tone of pure and elevated morality, but in a harsh and rugged style. Horace was the great object of his admiration; but no contrast can be greater than that which the style and manner of their respective compositions present.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

The Jewish Messiah—Jesus Christ—His Religion—Its Propagation—
Causes of its Success—Church Government.

WHILE such was the condition of the Roman empire under the successors of Augustus, the religion which was to supersede the various systems of polytheism in Europe and a part of Asia, was secretly and noiselessly progressing and making converts in all parts of the Roman dominions.

The inspired books of the Jews in many places spoke of a mighty prince of that nation, named the Messiah, i. e. the Anointed-one, who would rule over all mankind in justice and equity, and exalt his own peculiar people to an extraordinary degree of power and pre-eminence. He was to be born of the line of their ancient sovereigns of the house of David, and the interpreters of the prophetic writings had fixed the time of his advent to a period coinciding with the reign of Augustus. Interpreting their prophecies in a literal sense, they viewed the promised Deliverer as a great temporal prince who would wrest the supremacy of the world from Rome and confer it on Judæa; and the whole Jewish people were looking forward with hope and exultation to the predestined triumph of their arms and their creed.

The promised Saviour came at the appointed time; but under a widely different character from what the expounders of the Law and the Prophets had announced. An humble maiden of the house of David, the wife of a carpenter in one of the towns of Galilee, brought forth at Bethlehem, the city

of David, her first-born son. But her conception had not been in the ordinary manner. "The Holy Spirit had come upon" her, while yet a virgin; and "the power of the Highest had overshadowed" her; and the infant "was the Son of God." Signs and wonders signalised his birth; he grew up in privacy and obscurity; at the age of thirty he entered on his destined office as a teacher of mankind; by many wonderful works he proved his mission to be from on high, and himself to be the promised Messiah, whose triumph was to be over sin and the powers of darkness, and not over the arms of Rome. Many, struck by his miraculous powers and won by the beauty and sublimity of his doctrines, and their accordance with the writings of the prophets of Israel, became his followers; but a mild and beneficent system of religion was distasteful to the nation in general; the heads of the Jewish religion grew alarmed for their own power and influence; they therefore resolved on his destruction; and they forced the Roman governor to condemn him to death as a spreader of sedition against the Roman authority. The death which the Son of God endured was that of the cross (the usual mode at the time); but, as he had foretold to his disciples, he rose from the dead on the third day, and after an abode of forty days on the earth, he ascended, in their view, to heaven, leaving them a charge to disseminate his religion throughout the whole world.

None, we should suppose, require to be told what is the religion of Jesus Christ. All must know that its essence is the love of God and the love of man, that it inculcates every virtue, teaches to shun all evil, promises to the good eternal bliss and menaces the wicked with eternal misery in a future state of existence. So lovely is it, so mild, peaceful and beneficent is its character, that were its precepts generally, though but imperfectly, obeyed, even the present world would become a paradise. We speak of the religion which is contained in the sacred books of the New Testament in the words of Christ himself and his apostles, and not of the corrupted system, which grew up and usurped its place, the progress of which it will be our task to relate. There is perhaps no moral phenomenon so extraordinary as the change of the purity and simplicity of the Gospel into the polytheism and idolatry which afterwards assumed the name and office of Christianity; yet, as will appear, it is a phenomenon not difficult of explanation.

The religion of Christ was founded on that of Moses; but while the latter was limited to one people and one country, and burdened with a wearisome ceremonial and many peculiarities about meats and drinks and such like, the former, unlimited and unencumbered, was adapted to all parts of the earth, and suited to all those who had capacity to understand and follow its precepts. Its Divine Author therefore directed his disciples to preach it to all nations, and so bold and energetic were they in the performance of their commission, and so powerfully were they aided by the Divine Spirit which was promised them, that the religion was in the space of a few years diffused throughout the greater part of the Roman empire.

The first societies of the Christians (named *churches**) were necessarily in Judæa, and the principal one at Jerusalem, where the apostles or original companions of Christ chiefly resided. Gradually, by means of missionaries, the doctrine was spread beyond the limits of Judæa, and churches were established at Damascus, Antioch and other towns. The most powerful and effective of these missionaries was Saul (or as he was afterwards named Paul), who had been originally a persecutor of the church, but being converted by miracle, as he was on his road to Damascus, became a most zealous preacher of the truth which he had opposed. To zeal and ardour he united the advantages of learning and eloquence, he was versed in the literature of his own nation and in that of the Greeks, and was thus eminently qualified for the office assigned him, of being the apostle of the Gentiles. By means chiefly of this eminent man, within the space of five-and-twenty years from the death of Christ, churches had been formed in the principal towns of Syria, Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece, and even in the city of Rome.

The mode in which Paul and the other missionaries proceeded was as follows. The Jews were now (for the purposes of traffic, it would appear) established in most of the great towns of the Roman empire, and wherever they were they had their synagogues or places of worship. On arriving at any town, therefore, Paul (to take him for an example), as being a Jew, used to enter the synagogue on the sabbath-day, where, taking advantage of the custom which prevailed in the

* The term employed in the New Testament, is ἐκκλησία, "assembly." Church is usually derived from the phrase ὁ τοῦ κυρίου οἶκος, "the Lord's House," which was also employed to designate the believers in Christ.

synagogues, of inviting any persons who seemed inclined to address the congregation*, he undertook to prove to them that Jesus was the long-promised Messiah. If the Jews were convinced and believed, they became the *nucleus* of a church; if they did not, (as was more generally the case,) the apostle "turned to the Gentiles," that is, preached the Gospel to the heathen or the followers of the worship of false gods. The church of each town was usually composed of converts from among both Jews and Gentiles, but chiefly of the latter, the Jews being in general the implacable enemies of the religion which was to supersede their own, and which disappointed all their lofty anticipations.

In the moral as in the natural world, there is no effect without a preceding cause, no change is produced without a due preparation of circumstances. We may therefore inquire, without presumption, what were the circumstances that favoured the rapid progress of the Christian religion.

The celebrated historian of The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire assigns five causes for this great effect, namely, the zeal of the Christians—the doctrine of a future life—the miraculous powers ascribed to the church—the pure and austere morals of the Christians—and the union and discipline of the Christian republic. In his examination of each of these causes and its effects he exerts all his powers of sneer and irony to throw discredit on the early Christians, to represent them as weak dupes or artful impostors, and their religion as no more divine than those of Greece and Italy. We shall endeavour to examine them in a better spirit.

The first of the causes assigned by the historian is doubtless a true one. Without zeal, no system of philosophy, far less of religion, will ever make rapid progress in the world. The second cause is also true. The doctrine of a future state as taught by the apostles had in it a degree of purity, determinateness and certainty unattainable by the polytheism of the heathen, and which formed no part of the law given to the Jews by Moses. But we must not suppose, as the historian would have us, that a future state was not believed generally at that time by the Greeks and Romans. The philosophers and men of education, doubtless, disgusted by the absurd details of a future world, furnished by poets, and adopted in the popular creed,

* "And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying: Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on."—Acts xiii. 15.

and finding no demonstrative arguments for a future existence, had reasoned themselves into scepticism on the subject, and the doctrine therefore had little or no effect on their lives and conduct; but the vulgar still clung pertinaciously to the faith transmitted to them by their forefathers, and believed the poetic creed of the future world with all its incongruities*. The religious aspect of the Roman world at that time in fact very much resembled that of Catholic Europe at the present day; the popular religion was a mass of absurdities revolting to the understanding, the men of education rejected it and were sceptics or infidels, while the vulgar lay groveling in idolatry and superstition.

The historian's third cause,—the miraculous powers of the church,—is the one liable to most dispute. The infidel totally denies their reality; the believer is convinced of their truth. On this point no *à priori* arguments should be admitted; the inquirer should for example give no heed to reasonings from the steadiness and regularity of the course of nature, for we know not what that course is, and whether the effects which, as being unusual, we denominate miraculous or wonderful, may not form a part of it, and have been arranged so as to coincide in point of time with the promulgation of certain moral principles. The whole is in effect a question of evidence, and those who find the proofs offered for the authenticity of the New Testament convincing, must acknowledge that the promise of Divine aid made by Jesus to his disciples was fulfilled, and that the Holy Spirit enabled them to perform many wonderful works†. At the same time there are no safe grounds for supposing that this aid was continued beyond the age of the apostles. The Deity does nothing in vain; and

* In Lucian (De Luctu 2) will be found a proof of the tenacity with which the vulgar adhered to the traditional creed. The chief cause of Gibbon's error seems to have been his ignorance of the difference between the religious systems of Greece and Italy. Cæsar and Cicero might deride the poetic under-world, and Juvenal might say (ii. 149),

“Esse aliquid Manes et subterranea regna,
Et contum, et Stygio ranas in gurgite nigras,
Atque una transire vadum tot millia cymba,
Nec pueri credunt nisi qui nondum ære lavantur :”

but these are all Grecian, not Roman, ideas on the subject (see our Ovid's *Fasti*, Excurs. iv.), and the vulgar at Rome might make light of them and yet believe (as the vulgar everywhere do) in a future state.

† The most convincing work on the evidences of Christianity, in our opinion, is Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, the perusal of which we strongly recommend.

when once the Christian religion was firmly rooted in the world, supernatural assistance may have been withdrawn. In fact the accounts of all subsequent miracles exhibit the marks of error or imposition.

The fourth cause was beyond all question a most efficacious one. The virtues of the early Christians (to which we may add the purity of their system of morals) must have shone forth with pre-eminent lustre amid the moral darkness which then obscured the world. Not that virtue was totally extinct, for God never suffers it to become so among any people; but from the language used by the apostle Paul and from the history of the times, and the writings which have come down to us, we may infer that morality was never at a lower ebb than at that period of the Roman empire. There certainly was then no sect or society which showed the philanthropy and spirit of mutual love displayed by the early Christians. "Behold how these Christians love one another!" was the language of the admiring heathens.

The last cause assigned by the historian,—the government of the church,—could hardly have had much efficacy in the period of which we now treat. What the original form of church-government was is a question which was once agitated with a degree of violence and animosity that testified little for the acquaintance of the combatants with the true nature and spirit of the Gospel. It is now, we believe, pretty generally agreed among rational and moderate divines, that neither Christ nor his apostles intended to institute any particular form; leaving it to the members of the church to regulate it according to their ideas of what would best accord with the political constitution under which they lived. And, in fact, if we are to judge by the effects, we might say that forms of ecclesiastical government are indifferent, and that 'whate'er is best administer'd is best,' for equal degrees of piety and holiness seem to be attainable under all. True religion is seated in the heart; it depends not on outward forms: it is the pride, the ambition, the vanity of man, that has introduced schism and dissension into the church of Christ.

The first churches, as we have seen, were founded by missionaries, who travelled from place to place. While they were present with any church, they necessarily exercised an authority over it: but every society requires a permanent government; and therefore the churches seem almost immediately to have appointed some persons to preside in their assemblies,

and to execute other offices of supervision or ministration. These presidents were named Overseers or Elders*; they were chosen by the members of the church, and confirmed and appointed to their office by the founder or one authorised by him†. There is also a class of persons spoken of who were termed Prophets, and seem to have been men endowed with a ready eloquence, able to expound the Scriptures and to exhort and admonish the congregation‡. A third class of officers were named Deacons, i. e. Ministers §, who attended to the poor, and discharged some other duties.

Such seems to have been the external form of the churches during the lifetime of the apostles. Each congregation was independent of all others, governed by officers chosen by its members, living in harmony and friendly communication with the other churches; those who were more wealthy contributing to the comforts of those, which, like the parent one at Jerusalem, were more exposed to affliction and poverty.

It was not perhaps in general till after the death of the apostles that the congregations, having become very numerous, a change was made in their form of government, and the office of Bishop or Overseer was separated from that of Elder, and restricted to one person in each society. His office was for life, he was the recognised organ and head of the church, he had the management of its funds, and the appointment to the offices of the ministry. He also administered the rite of baptism, and he pronounced the blessing over the bread and wine used at the Lord's Supper. The presbyters were his council or assistants, for he was only regarded as the first among equals.

Such then was the church of Christ in its early days. It was composed of converts from among the Jews and Gentiles, chiefly of the middle and lower ranks, for it did not exclude even slaves ||. It was in general disregarded or despised by

* *Ἐπίσκοποι* and *πρεσβύτεροι*. That they were synonymous, is evident, from the following passages: Acts xx. 18 and 28; Tit. i. 5 and 7; and 1 Peter, v. 1, 2 in the original Greek. See also Phil. i. 1. From the former, are derived the modern Vescovo (It.), Obispo (Sp.), Evêque (Fr.), Bishop (Eng.); from the latter, Prete (It.), Prêtre (Fr.), Priest (Eng.).

† Tit. i. 5.

‡ 1 Cor. xiv. 3-5.

§ *Διάκονοι*.

|| It must not however be inferred, as is sometimes done by the enemies of our religion, that there were hardly any of the better classes among the early converts. The mention in the Apostolic writings of masters and servants, the directions given to women not to adorn themselves with gold and silver pearls and costly array, the sums raised for the relief of the poorer

the learned and the great, by whom it was confounded with Judaism, which from its unsocial character was the object of universal dislike, and was treated as a baneful superstition. That the early Christians were not perfect, is evinced by the Epistles of Paul himself, which at the same time prove how pure and holy were the precepts delivered to them; and if Tacitus and Suetonius speak of the Christians as the worst of men, their friend, the younger Pliny, who in his office of governor of a province had occasion to become better acquainted with that persecuted sect, bears testimony to the purity of their morals and the innocence of their lives*.

churches, all testify the contrary. St. Paul's remark, that there were *not many* of the noble or the mighty in the church of Corinth, would seem to intimate that there were *some*; and the injunction to beware of the philosophy of the Greeks, and the Oriental *Gnosis*, would hardly have been necessary if the Christians were all ignorant and illiterate.

* "They affirmed," says Pliny, "that the whole of their fault or error lay in this: that they were wont to meet together on a stated day before it was light, and sing among themselves alternately a hymn to Christ as to God, and bind themselves by an oath, not to the commission of any wickedness, but not to be guilty of theft, or robbery, or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor to deny a pledge committed to them when called on to return it."

HISTORY

OF

THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

PART II.

EMPERORS CHOSEN BY THE ARMY.

CHAPTER I.*

GALBA. OTHO. VITELLIUS.

A.U. 821-823. A.D. 68-70.

Galba.—Adoption of Piso.—Murder of Galba.—Otho.—Civil War.—Battle of Bedriacum.—Death of Otho.—Vitellius.—Vespasian proclaimed Emperor.—Advance of the Flavians.—Storming of Cremona.—Burning of the Capitol.—Capture of Rome.—Death of Vitellius.

THE supreme power in the Roman world had now been held for a century by the family which, in accordance with the Roman practice of adoption, we may regard as and term the Julian or Cæsarian. It had also been transmitted in lineal succession, except in the case of Claudius, when the guards proved to the senate and the people that the power of giving a master to the Roman world lay with *them*. We are now to see this power claimed and exercised by the legions, and the pretensions of rival candidates asserted by the arms of their supporters†.

* Authorities : Tacitus, Suetonius, Dion and Plutarch.

† Hence we term this the period of emperors elected by the army, though such was not strictly the case in all parts of it, as from Nerva to Commodus.

Ser. Sulpicius Galba.

A.U. 821-822. A.D. 68-69.

Servius Sulpicius Galba, a member of one of the most ancient and honourable patrician families at Rome, was now in the seventy-third year of his age. He had borne the high offices of the state, had governed both Africa and Spain, and had displayed military talents in the former province and in Germany, which had procured him the triumphal ornaments. Both as a general and as a governor, he had shown himself to be rigidly severe and even harsh. He was infected with the usual vice of age—avarice, and he was entirely under the influence of those by whom he was surrounded.

The prætorian guards had been induced by their prefect Nymphidius Sabinus (the colleague of Tigellinus) to abandon Nero and declare for Galba, in whose name he promised them the enormous donative of 7500 denars a man, while the soldiers of the legions he engaged should each receive 1250 denars. The troops which Nero had collected in Italy being thus gained over, the senate followed their example, and the usual titles and power were decreed to Galba.

When Galba was certified of the death of Nero, he assumed the title of Cæsar, and set out for Rome. In that city there had been some disturbance, for Nymphidius had tried to induce the prætorian cohorts to declare for himself, but he had been overpowered and slain. On his route, Galba put to death a consular and a consul-elect, without even the form of a trial; and when as he drew near to the city, the rowers of the fleet whom Nero had converted into soldiers met him, and refusing to return to their former condition, demanded an eagle and standards, he ordered his horse to charge them, and not content with the slaughter thus made, he decimated the remainder. When the prætorians demanded the donative promised in his name, he replied that it was his way to levy, not to purchase his soldiers. He broke and sent home the German guards of the Cæsars, without giving them any gratuity. He offended the people by refusing to punish at their earnest desire Tigellinus and some others of the ministers of Nero's cruelty. He however put to death Helius, Locusta and others.

It added much to the unpopularity of Galba that he was almost in a state of pupillage to three persons, namely T. Vinus, his legate when in Spain, Cornelius Laco, whom he had made

prefect of the prætorians, and his freedman Icelus, to whom he had given the equestrian ring, and the surname of Martianus. These persons had all their own ends in view, and as they knew that under any circumstances the life of the emperor could not be long, they thought only of providing for their future interests.

The provinces and the armies in general submitted to the emperor appointed by the senate. It was not so however with the legions in the Germanies. Galba had most unwisely recalled the noble Verginius under the show of friendship, but in reality out of fear and jealousy, and sent A. Vitellius to command the army of Lower Germany, whose general Fonteius Capito had been slain by his legates Cornelius Aquinus and Fabius Valens; while Hordeonius Flaccus, who commanded the army of Upper Germany, enfeebled by age and the gout, had lost all authority over his troops.

It was with this last army that the disturbance began. On new-year's-day (69) Galba entered on the consulate with Vinus for his colleague, and a few days after word came that the legions of Upper Germany insisted on having another emperor, leaving the choice to the senate and people. This intelligence made Galba hasten the execution of a design he had already formed of adopting some person, as he was himself childless, and he held consultations with his three friends on the subject. They were divided in their sentiments. M. Salvius Otho, from whom it may be recollected Nero had taken Poppea, had early joined Galba, whom he hoped to succeed; there was a great intimacy between him and Vinus, whose daughter it was believed he was engaged to marry, and Vinus therefore now strongly urged his claim to the adoption. Laco and Icelus had no particular favourite, but they were resolved to oppose the candidate of Vinus. Galba, partly, as was thought, moved by a regard for the state, which would have been to no purpose delivered from Nero if transmitted to Otho, and partly as was supposed influenced by Laco, fixed on Piso Licinianus, a young man of the noblest birth and the strictest morals. Having adopted him with the usual forms, he took him into the camp and informed the soldiers of what he had done; but influenced by his parsimony and his regard for ancient usages, he unfortunately said not a word of a donative, and the troops listened to him with silence and disgust.

Otho, who from the state of his affairs saw ruin impending over him, now resolved to make a desperate effort and be emperor or perish. He had for some time been secretly tampering with the soldiery. By means of his freedman Ono-

mastus, he gained over two soldiers, who undertook to make trial of the fidelity of their comrades, and on the fifth day after the adoption of Piso (Jan. 15), as Galba was sacrificing at the temple of the Palatine Apollo, Onomastus came to Otho, who was standing by him, and said that the architect and builders were waiting for him, that being the signal agreed on. Otho, pretending that he had bought some houses which required to be examined, went away, and at the golden milestone in the Forum he was met by three-and-twenty soldiers who saluted him emperor, and placing him in a sedan hurried him away to the camp, being joined by about as many more on the way.

Galba was still engaged sacrificing, when the report came, first, that some senator, and then that Otho, was carried away to the camp. It was resolved to make trial at once of the fidelity of the cohort which was on guard at the palace, and Piso went and stood on the steps and addressed them. But though he promised a donative, they did not declare themselves. All the other troops joined the prætorians, with the exception of those whom Nero had drafted from the German army to serve in Egypt, and whom Galba had lately treated with much kindness.

The populace hastened to the palace with loud and noisy loyalty, and while Galba was consulting with his friends, word came that Otho was slain in the camp; the senators and knights then taking courage vied with the populace in clamorous loyalty, and Galba was put into a chair to proceed to the camp. Just as he was setting out, a guardsman showing his bloody sword, cried out that he had slain Otho: Galba, ever mindful of discipline*, replied, "Fellow-soldier, who ordered you?" Piso, who had been sent to the camp, met the emperor on his way with the assurance that all was lost, the soldiers having declared for Otho. While they were deliberating on what were best to be done, the soldiers, horse and foot, rushed into the Forum and dispersed the senators and the people. At the sight of them, the standard-bearer of the cohort which was with Galba threw down his ensign. The aged emperor was flung from his chair at the place called the Lake of Curtius. He desired the soldiers to slay him, if it seemed for the good of the state, and he was instantly despatched. Vinius was the next victim. Piso fled to the temple of Vesta, where he was concealed by a public slave attached to it; but he was soon discovered, dragged out and slain, and his

* When Galba took the command of the African army from Gætulicus, the soldiers made the following verse:—

Disce miles militare, Galba est, non Gætulicus. Suet. Galba, 6.

head brought to Otho. Laco, Icelus and several others were put to death. The body of Galba, after being exposed to the insults of the soldiery and rabble, was indebted for sepulture to his steward Argius, who interred it in his own garden.

M. Salvius Otho.

A.U. 822. A.D. 69.

The soldiers now did everything they pleased; for Otho, even if inclined, had not the power to restrain them; the senate and people rushed into servitude as usual. The tribunician power, the name of Augustus, and all the other honours were decreed to Otho, and, as far as Rome was concerned, his power was supreme. But he had hardly entered on his new dignity when he received intelligence that the German legions, joined by several of the Gallic states, had declared A. Vitellius emperor, and that two armies, under his legates, Fabius Valens and Alienus Cæcina, were in full march for Italy.

The legions of Britain and of Rætia had also declared for Vitellius. Those of Spain at first gave in their adhesion to Otho, but they speedily turned to his rival. The troops of the East and of Africa took the oath to Otho, when they learned his elevation by the senate. The army of Illyricum also took the engagement to him, and adhered to it. His chief reliance however was on the guards and the other troops which had revolted in his favour against Galba. During the time that Otho remained in the city, preparing for the war, he displayed a degree of prudence and vigour not expected from his general character. He gained popularity by giving up to the public vengeance the infamous Tigellinus, and by bestowing pardon and his confidence on Marius Celsus, a consul-elect, who had exhibited the most exemplary fidelity toward Galba, and who afterwards proved equally faithful to Otho himself.

On the eve of the Ides of March (14th), Otho, having commended the state to the care of the senate, set out to take the command of his army; for Valens at the head of 40,000 men was now approaching Italy by the Cottian Alps, while Cæcina, with 30,000, was entering it by the Pennine Alps, and a part of the troops in Cisalpine Gaul had declared for Vitellius, and seized Milan, Novarra and some other municipal towns. The whole of Italy to the Po was thus in the hands of the Vitellians.

As Otho had the entire command of the sea, he had put troops on board of the fleet from Misenum, and sent them to make a diversion on the southern coast of Gaul, and they had some success against the troops despatched by Valens to oppose them. The Pannonian legions were on their march for Italy, and they had sent their cavalry and light troops on before. Five prætorian cohorts, with the first legion, and some cavalry, and a band of two thousand gladiators, were despatched from the city, under the command of Annius Gallus and Vestricius Spurinna, to occupy the banks of the Po, and Otho himself followed with the remainder of the prætorian cohorts, a body of veteran prætorians, and a large number of the rowers of the fleet.

Cæcina, having crossed the Po, unopposed, moved along the stream of that river, and sat down before Placentia, into which Spurinna had thrown himself. On the very first day of the siege, the splendid amphitheatre, the largest in Italy, which lay without the walls, was burnt, by accident or design. Having failed in all his attempts to storm the town, Cæcina put his troops over the river and marched against Cremona. Gallus, who had crossed the Po, was leading the first legion to the relief of Placentia, but being informed by letters from Spurinna of the route taken by Cæcina, he halted at a village named Bedriacum, between Verona and Cremona*. Meantime Martius Macro had suddenly crossed the Po with the gladiators and routed a body of the Vitellian auxiliaries. The Othonians were now elate with success, and eager for battle, and they wrote to Otho, accusing their generals of treachery in restraining their ardour.

The Othonian generals wished to avoid engaging the veterans of Vitellius with their holiday troops, which had never seen any service, and to wait for the arrival of the Pannonian legions. On the other hand, Cæcina, maddened by the repulses which he had received at Placentia, and anxious to bring matters to a conclusion before the arrival of Valens, was impatient of delay. He therefore sought to provoke a battle, and placing the best of his auxiliary troops in ambush in the woods on each side of the road at a place called The Temple of the Castors†, about twelve miles from Cremona, he sent a party of horse along the road with directions to fall on the enemy

* Properly between Mantua and Cremona; for there never ran a road direct from Verona to Cremona.

† "Locus Castorum vocatur."—Tac. "Ad Castoria."—Suet. Otho 9. It was perhaps near *Piadena*.

and then retire and draw them into the ambuscade. The plan however was betrayed to the Othonian generals, Suetonius Paulinus* and Marius Celsus, of whom the former taking the command of the foot, and the latter that of the horse, they made such dispositions as might turn the enemy's wile against himself. Accordingly, when the Vitellian horse turned and fled, Celsus kept his men in check; those in the ambush then rising before their time, Celsus gradually fell back, till he drew them to where they found the road occupied by the legionaries, while cohorts were on each side, and the cavalry had now gotten into their rear. Had Paulinus given the word at once, they might have been cut to pieces; but he delayed so long, that they had time to save themselves in the adjoining vineyards and a little wood, from which they made sallies and killed some of the most forward of the Othonian horse. The Othonian infantry now pushed forwards, and as Cæcina sent his troops out only by single cohorts to oppose them, the resistance which they experienced was slight, and it was thought on both sides that if Paulinus had not sounded a recall, Cæcina's army might have been annihilated. The reason which Paulinus assigned for doing so, was his fear lest his wearied men should be attacked by fresh troops from the camp of the Vitellians, in which case he should have no reserve to support them; his arguments however did not prove generally satisfactory.

This check abated very much the insolence of both Cæcina and his men; it had a similar effect on those of Valens, who had now reached Ticinum (*Pavia*). They had lately been very mutinous, and their general had even narrowly escaped death at their hands; and when now they heard of the recent disaster of their comrades, they were near breaking out into mutiny again. They would brook no delay; they urged on the standard-bearers, and they speedily joined the army of Cæcina.

Otho now advised with his generals whether it would be better to protract the war, or to bring matters to a speedy decision. Suetonius argued strongly in favour of the former course. The Vitellians, he said, were all there, they could calculate on no additions to their force; they would soon be in want of corn; the summer was coming on, and the Germans, it was well known, could not stand the heat of Italy. On the other hand, Otho had Pannonia, Mœsia and the East, with their large armies; he had Italy and the city with him, and the

* The conqueror of the British queen Boadicea.

name of the senate and the people, which was always of importance: he had plenty of money, and his men were inured to the climate. The line of the Po, as Placentia had proved, could be easily defended; he would speedily be joined by the legions from Illyricum. All therefore conspired to recommend delay. The opinions of Celsus and Annius Gallus coincided with that of Suetonius. On the other hand, Otho himself was inclined to a speedy decision, and his brother Titianus, to whom he had given the chief command, and the prætorian præfect, Licinius Proculus, men utterly devoid of experience, flattered his wishes. The generals ceased to oppose. It was then asked, should the emperor himself appear in the field or not? Suetonius and Celsus gave no opinion, and the others decided that he should retire to Brescia (*Brixellum*), and reserve himself for the empire. Nothing could be more pernicious than this course, for he took with him some of the best troops; and moreover, as the soldiers distrusted their generals, and had confidence in himself alone, it diminished the moral force of the army.

Valens and Cæcina, who by means of scouts and deserters knew all that was going on in the enemy's camp, now began to throw a bridge of boats over the Po, as if with the intention of driving off the gladiators. While they were thus engaged, the Othonians advanced four miles from Bedriacum, and encamped, displaying so little skill in the selection of the site, that though it was spring-time, and there was a number of streams all about them, the soldiers actually suffered for want of water. Celsus and Paulinus were generals only in name, and their opinions had never been taken. The troops were then set in motion, to march for the confluence of the Po and the Adda, sixteen miles off, to the west of Cremona, in spite of the remonstrances of the generals, Titianus and Proculus, being confirmed by an express from Otho ordering matters to be brought to a decision at once.

Cæcina was viewing the progress of the bridge, when word came that the enemy was at hand. He hurried back to the camp, where he found that Valens had got the troops under arms. The horse issued forth, and charged the Othonians, but were driven back; the legions, favoured by the denseness of the trees, which concealed them from view, formed without disorder. The Othonians were advancing without any order; the baggage and the followers mingled with the soldiers, along a road with deep ditches on each side. A report being spread

that his own troops had revolted from Vitellius, the Othonians, when they came in view, saluted the Vitellians as friends, but they were soon made to perceive their error. A severe conflict ensued, but the Othonians were finally routed and driven to their camp, and the Vitellians took up their position for the night within a mile of it. The prætorians alone were unbroken in spirit: they asserted that they were betrayed, not conquered, and insisted on continuing the war. Morning however brought cooler thoughts, and a deputation was sent to sue for peace, which was readily granted, and the two armies then united.

When the news of the defeat at Bedriacum reached Brescia, the troops there, instead of being dejected, sought to inspire their emperor to continue the war, and envoys from the Mæsan legions, who were now at Aquileia, assured him of their resolution to adhere to his cause. But Otho had already formed his determination to end the contest for empire by a voluntary death. He addressed those about him in manly terms, declaring that he would not be the cause of ruin to such brave and worthy men. He insisted on their providing for their own safety, and having distributed money among them and burnt all letters reflecting on Vitellius, he retired in the evening to his bed-chamber, and taking two daggers and trying their edge, he placed one under his pillow. He passed the night in tranquillity, and at daybreak he thrust the dagger into his bosom. At the groan which he gave, his freedmen and friends came in, but they found him already dead. The funeral was hurried over, for so he had earnestly desired, lest his head should be cut off and insulted. Some of the soldiers slew themselves at the pyre, and their example was followed by many at Bedriacum, Placentia and other places*.

* Verginius at this time ran the risk of his life for again refusing the empire. He had afterwards a narrow escape from the soldiers of Vitellius when at that emperor's own table: "*Nec quemquam sæpius quam Verginium,*" says Tacitus (Hist. ii. 68), "*omnis seditio infestavit; manebat admiratio viri et fama, sed oderant ut fastiditi.*" This excellent man however escaped all dangers, and died when consul for the third time, in the reign of Nerva, having reached his 83rd year. His funeral oration was pronounced by Tacitus. Pliny, whose guardian he had been, speaks of him (Ep. ii. l. vi. 10) in terms of the greatest respect and affection.

A. Vitellius.

A.U. 822-823. A.D. 69-70.

The news of the death of Otho reached Rome during the celebration of the Cereal games. The event, joined with that of Flavius Sabinus, the city-prefect, having caused the soldiers there to take the oath to Vitellius, being announced in the theatre, the spectators shouted for Vitellius, and then carried the images of Galba, adorned with laurel and flowers, round to the temples. The usual honours and titles were without hesitation decreed to Vitellius by the senate, and thanks were voted to the armies of Germany.

Aulus Vitellius, who was thus suddenly raised to empire, was the son of L. Vitellius, who, as we have seen above, was one of the basest of flatterers in the times of Caius and Claudius. He himself had in early youth been an inmate of the Capræan sty of Tiberius; he gained the favour of Caius by his fondness for chariot-races, that of Claudius by his love of dice, and that of Nero by adroit flattery of his passion for the stage. He was distinguished above all men for his gluttony, so that Galba, when sending him to Lower Germany, gave as his reason for selecting him, that none are less to be feared, than those who think of nothing but eating.

Vitellius was collecting reinforcements in Gaul when he heard of the victory at Bedriacum. He was met at Lyons (*Lugdunum*) by his own generals and by those of the Othonians. Of these last, Suetonius and Proculus escaped by ascribing to treachery on their own part the accidents which had favoured the Vitellians. Titianus was excused on the ground of natural affection to his brother, and Celsus was even allowed to retain the consulate, to which he had been appointed. The most zealous of the Othonian centurions however were put to death, an act which tended greatly to alienate the Illyrian army. On the whole, however, Vitellius did not exhibit much of either avarice or cruelty; but his gluttony exceeded all conception, and the wealth of the empire seemed inadequate to the supply of his table. At the same time all the north of Italy suffered from the licence of the soldiery, who, heedless of their officers, committed every species of excess. The spirit of the Othonians, too, was unbroken, and their language was haughty and menacing. The fourteenth legion, which was the most turbulent, was therefore

ordered to return to Britain, whence it had been recalled by Nero, and the prætorians were first separated and then disbanded. At Ticinum, almost in the presence of Vitellius himself, a tumult took place between the legionaries and the auxiliaries of his own army. It was appeased with difficulty, and in consequence of it the Batavian cohorts were sent home,—a measure productive of future calamity.

Vitellius thence proceeded to Cremona, where he was present at a show of gladiators given by Cæcina. He then feasted his eyes with a view of the battle-field at Bedriacum, where the slain lay still unburied. At Bologna he visited another show of gladiators given by Valens. He advanced by easy journeys toward Rome, exhausting the whole country on his way by requisitions for the numerous train that followed him. At length he came in view of Rome, at the head of an army of 60,000 men, attended by a still greater number of camp-followers. Senators and knights, and crowds of the most profligate of the populace poured forth to meet him. He was about to enter the city as a conqueror in the military habit; but at the suggestion of his friends he assumed the magisterial *prætecta*. The eagles of four legions were borne before him, ensigns and standards were around him, the troops—foot, horse and allies,—followed, all in their most splendid array. He thus ascended the Capitol, where he embraced his excellent mother and saluted her by the title of Augusta.

It was remarked as a matter of ill omen, that Vitellius took the office of chief-pontiff on the 18th of July, a day rendered memorable in the annals of Rome by the disasters at the Cremera and the Allia. He affected a civil deportment, refusing the title of Augustus, attending the meetings of the senate as a simple member of their body, and accompanying his friends and soliciting votes for them in their canvass for the consulate. These popular arts, however, did not blind men to his vices. His gluttony passed all bounds of moderation; he had three or four huge meals every day, for which he prepared himself by emetics, and the lowest cost of each was 400,000 sesterces. One banquet given him by his brother is said to have comprised in its bill of fare 2000 of the choicest fishes and 7000 of the rarest birds. He was also immoderately given to the sports of the Circus theatre and amphitheatre; and he alarmed men's minds by offering public sacrifices to the Manes of Nero, as if he proposed that prince for his example. Like his predecessors, he was governed

by a freedman named Asiaticus, who in cruelty, rapacity, and every other vice fully equalled those of the courts of Claudius and Nero. The generals Cæcina and Valens, of whom the former was more desirous of power, the latter of money, also acted as they pleased, and altogether Tacitus observes, "no one in that court attempted to distinguish himself by worth or application to business, the only road to power being to satiate the insatiable appetites of Vitellius by extravagant banquets and expense and debauchery of every kind." The historian adds, that in the few months that he reigned, Vitellius spent nine hundred millions of sesterces.

The soldiers meantime were held under little restraint; but their strength was melting away, from their riotous living and from the insalubrity of the air and soil about Rome. The strength of the legions was also reduced by the formation of sixteen new prætorian and four Urban cohorts, into which any legionary who pleased might volunteer.

The luxurious enjoyments of Vitellius were soon disturbed by tidings that the legions of the East would not submit to have a head imposed on the empire by those of Germany. There were four legions in Syria under the command of Licinius Mucianus, the governor of that province; T. Flavius Vespasianus at the head of three legions had been for the last three years carrying on the war against the rebellious Jews, which he had now nearly brought to a conclusion; and Ti. Alexander, the prefect of Egypt, commanded two other legions. Vespasian had sent his son Titus to Rome, with his adhesion to Galba; but hearing on his way of the murder of that emperor, Titus had stopped, lest he might be made a hostage by either of the rival parties. The armies of the East had taken the oath of fidelity to Otho, without making any objection; but when Vespasian would set them the example of taking it to Vitellius, they listened to him in profound silence. He then began to meditate on his own chances of empire; both Mucianus and Alexander, he had abundant reason to believe, would aid him in attaining it; the third legion, which was now in Mœsia, had been drawn thither from Syria, and he was certain of its attachment to himself, and it might be able to gain over the other legions of Illyricum. On the other hand, he reflected on the strength of the German legions, with which he was well acquainted, and their superiority over those of the East, and also on the risk

of his being assassinated like Scribonianus in the time of Claudius.

The legates and other officers tried to encourage him, and Mucianus both in private and public urged every topic likely to prevail with him. His mind was also affected by sundry omens and prophecies which he recollected; and he at length resolved to run the risk and win the empire, or perish in the attempt. To make the necessary preparations he repaired to Cæsarea, while Mucianus hastened to Antioch,—the capitals of their respective provinces. It was, however, at Alexandria, that he was first proclaimed emperor; where, on the 1st of July, Alexander made the legions take the oath of fidelity to Vespasian; and two days later, as he was coming out of his chamber at Cæsarea, some soldiers who were at hand saluted him emperor; the rest then shouted out Cæsar, Augustus, and the other imperial titles, and he no longer refused them. Mucianus had meantime brought over the Syrian legions, chiefly by assuring them that it was the intention of Vitellius to replace them by those of Germany, and remove them to the snows and cold of the north. The neighbouring kings, Sohemus, Antiochus and Agrippa joined in the league, and a meeting was held at Berytus to deliberate on the best mode of proceeding.

It was there resolved that every effort should be made to obtain money and supplies of all kinds; that embassies should be sent to the Parthians and Armenians, to engage them to remain at peace; that Titus should carry on the war in Judæa; and Vespasian himself secure Egypt; while Mucianus should set out with a part of the army against Vitellius; and that letters should be written to all the armies and legates; and every means be employed to induce the disbanded prætorian cohorts to resume their arms in the cause of Vespasian.

Accordingly Mucianus set forth at once with a body of light troops, a much larger force following at a slower pace. He ordered the fleet from the Pontus to meet him at Byzantium, not being yet determined whether he would march through Mœsia or pass direct from Dyrrhachium to Brundisium or Tarentum. His course however was decided by the news of what had occurred in the army of Illyricum. For three legions from Mœsia (one of which was the third) having reached Aquileia, on their march to join Otho, there learned the death of that prince. While they halted, officers arrived inviting them to submit to Vitellius, but they tore the banners which were sent to them bearing his name, and

seized and divided among them the public money. The third then setting the example, they declared for Vespasian, and they wrote to the Pannonian army, inviting them to join them under the penalty of being treated as enemies. This army, consisting of two legions, which had fought at Bedriacum, eager to efface the disgrace of defeat, was easily induced, chiefly by means of Antonius Primus, the commander of one of the legions, to accept the invitation; and the two armies being united, they easily prevailed on that of Dalmatia to join them.

The revolt of the Mœsian legions was communicated to Vitellius by Aponius Saturninus, the governor of Mœsia. He affected to make light of it, but he sent to summon aid from Germany, Spain, and Britain. At length, when the extent of the defection became known, he ordered Cæcina and Valens to make ready for war. As Valens was then unwell, Cæcina took the sole command, and the German army marched from Rome, but no longer the same, a few weeks' abode there having sufficed to relax its discipline and destroy its energy. The troops were directed to repair to Cremona and to Hostilia, a village in the district of Verona; Cæcina himself proceeded to Ravenna, to confer with Lucilius Bassus, the commander of the fleet, and thence to Padua, to watch the course of events.

The Flavian generals meantime held a consultation as to the best mode of proceeding. Some were for merely securing the Pannonian Alps and waiting for reinforcements, but Antonius Primus declared vehemently in favour of advancing into Italy at once, lest the Vitellians should have time to recover their discipline and be joined by troops from Gaul, Spain, and Britain. His opinion prevailed. Letters were written to Aponius, who had declared for the Flavian cause, urging him to come quickly with the Mœsian army. To secure the provinces from the attacks of the barbarians in the absence of the legions, the princes of the Sarmatian Jazyges, and Sido and Italicus, the kings of the Suevians, were taken into alliance. The army then descended into the plain of the Po, and the generals again debated what place should be fixed on for the seat of the war. Vespasian had sent orders for the army to halt at Aquileia and wait for Mucianus, as by his own occupation of Egypt, whence Italy was chiefly supplied with corn, he hoped that want of food and pay would oblige the Vitellians to submit without the hazard of a battle.

Mucianus also, fearing lest the glory of terminating the contest should be snatched from himself, wrote several letters to the same effect. But the army had already determined on the attack of Verona, and had occupied Vicenza (*Vicetia*) on its way to that town.

Cæcina had taken a strong position near Hostilia, having a river in his rear and marshes on his flanks. Though his troops far outnumbered those of the Flavians, which as yet consisted of only two legions, and when joined within a few days by Aponius with another legion, were yet inferior,—he negotiated instead of fighting. The Flavians were soon after joined by two other legions, and they then prepared to assault Verona. But a sedition speedily broke out among them. They accused Aponius and Ampius Flavianus the legate of Pannonia, of treachery, and these officers had to fly for their lives, and the sole command remained with Antonius, who was suspected of having excited the mutiny with this very view.

Lucilius Bassus now made an attempt to induce the fleet at Ravenna to declare for Vespasian; but he was seized by his own men, and sent a prisoner to Hadria. Cæcina, who had made a secret agreement with the Flavian party, at first succeeded in inducing his men to declare for Vespasian, but they soon however repented, seized him and put him in bonds, and marched back to join the legions that were at Cremona.

Antonius, judging that Valens, who was an able officer and faithful to Vitellius, would soon arrive to take the command, resolved to bring matters to a speedy decision. He therefore quitted Verona, and advancing toward Cremona, encamped at Bedriacum. While the legionaries were fortifying the camp, he sent the auxiliary cohorts to plunder the lands of Cremona, and he himself, with a body of 4000 horse, advanced for eight miles along the road leading to that city. Toward noon the enemy was announced to be on his march. An officer named Arrius Varus dashed forward, and charged and drove back with some slight loss the Vitellian horse, who were in advance; but fresh troops coming to their aid, the Flavians were repulsed in their turn. Antonius however checked their flight and routed the Vitellians, who were in pursuit, and threw them back on two of their legions, which had advanced to the fourth mile-stone from Cremona, and Vipstanus Messala coming up with the Mœsian auxiliaries, the Vitellian legions were driven back to the town.

In the evening the whole Flavian army came up on the ground where the engagement had taken place. Seeing the heaps of slain, they looked on the war as terminated, and they were proposing to themselves the storm and plunder of Cremona, from which probably neither the arguments nor the authority of Antonius would have withheld them, had not some horsemen, who had been sent forward to reconnoitre, reported that the troops from Hostilia had joined, and that the whole strength of the Vitellian army now lay at Cremona. This intelligence rendered them obedient to their general, and though night was closing in, Antonius placed them in order of battle on the road itself and the lands on each side of it.

The Vitellians, who were now without any general officers, were so confident of their own strength, that they would not remain in the town, and they set forth with the intention of falling on and routing the Flavians, whom they supposed to be exhausted with cold and want of food. It was about nine o'clock when they suddenly fell in with them, drawn up as we have described. A desultory, irregular conflict was maintained through the night. The Vitellians had drawn their artillery all up on the road, whence it was doing great execution, especially a huge *balista* belonging to the fifteenth legion; when two gallant soldiers of the Flavians, taking up the shields of the Vitellians, that they might not be known, rushed forwards, and though they lost their lives in the attempt, they succeeded in cutting the cords of the engines, and thus rendering them useless. At length the moon rose behind the Flavians, lengthening their shadows and giving them a clear view of the enemy, who now fought under a manifest disadvantage. When the sun appeared, the third (as was the usage in Syria) saluted that lord of day. A report ran through both armies, that it was the troops of Mucianus, who had just arrived, that they were thus greeting. Antonius, taking advantage of the effect of this report, made a steady charge on the loosely-formed Vitellians, who speedily broke and fled to Cremona, whither the victorious Flavians lost no time in following them. But when they approached the town, they saw a labour before them which they had not expected. In the beginning of the war, the German army, when it entered Italy, had fixed a strongly-fortified camp under the walls of Cremona, and its strength had been lately augmented very considerably. The Flavians saw that they must either attack and carry this camp, or return to Bedriacum, or adopt

the hazardous course of encamping in view of a numerous army. They chose the first course, perilous as it was; the gates and ramparts were assailed: when their efforts slackened, one of their leaders (Antonius, as some said) pointed to Cremona as their reward, and their exertions were renewed. At length the tenth burst open one of the gates and rushed in; the camp was speedily carried, and the Vitellians were slaughtered in vast numbers as they made their escape to the town. Their loss in this and the preceding actions is said to have exceeded 30,000 men, while that of the Flavians amounted only to 4500*.

The city of Cremona was defended by lofty walls and towers and massive gates. Its population was numerous, and this being the time of one of its fairs, it was full of people from the rest of Italy. This last circumstance however acted as an incentive on the Flavians, who reckoned that the plunder would be by so much the greater. The assault was therefore commenced: at first the resistance was vigorous, but gradually it slackened, as the Vitellian officers began to reflect that if Cremona were taken by storm they had no further place of refuge, and that it was on *them* that the vengeance of the victors would fall. They therefore set Cæcina at liberty and prayed him to be their mediator; they threw aside the standards of Vitellius, and displayed tokens of supplication from the walls. Antonius then ordered his men to cease, and the Vitellians marched out with the honours of war. The Flavians at first insulted them, but when they marked their humble demeanour and called to mind that these were the men who had used their victory at Bedriacum with such moderation, they felt compassion. But when Cæcina appeared with the consular ensigns, they could not control their indignation, and Antonius had difficulty to save him.

Antonius either could not or would not save the town; 40,000 soldiers and a still greater number of camp-followers, the more terrible of the two on such an occasion, rushed in. The usual series of atrocities, murder, rape, robbery, torture, enacted in towns taken by storm, ensued. The town was fired in various parts; it burned for four days; at the end of which time a solitary temple without the gates alone remained to testify the former existence of Cremona.

* Josephus, Jewish War, iv. 11. Hegesippus, iv. 30.

Vitellius meantime was thinking only of his sensual enjoyments*. Valens, with a train of women and eunuchs, was moving leisurely onwards, when he heard of the treachery of Cæcina and Lucilius Bassus. Instead of hastening by forced marches to Cremona or making some daring effort, he still loitered, and thought only of seducing the wives and daughters of his hosts. He fell back into Umbria, and thence into Etruria, where, hearing of the loss of the battle at Cremona, he seized some shipping and made sail for Narbonese Gaul, with the intention of exciting the Gauls and Germans to arms. But his project failed; and being driven by a storm to some islets near Marseilles, he was there taken by the ships sent by the Flavians in pursuit of him.

The whole of Italy north and east of the Apennines was now in the hands of the Flavians. As the winter was approaching and the Po was beginning to overflow, Antonius resolved to make no further delay, and leaving the sick and wounded and a part of the legionaries at Verona, he advanced with the remainder along the Æmilian road to Fano (*Fanum Fortunæ*) on the coast. Vitellius had sent fourteen prætorian cohorts and all his cavalry to defend the passage of the Apennines, committing the defence of the city to his brother L. Vitellius and the remaining prætorian cohorts. He occupied himself with remitting tributes, granting immunities, appointing consuls for a series of years, and such like useless or pernicious acts, never intermitting the pleasures of the table till he learned that the army insisted on his presence with it. He then set out with a great number of the senators and joined it at Mevania (*Marozia*) in Umbria; but the total ignorance of war which he displayed and his continual drunkenness proved how unqualified he was for empire. Instead of crossing the Apennines and attacking the enemy, who was suffering from the weather and from want of supplies in an exhausted country, he frittered away the strength of his army and exposed it to be cut up in detail. Tidings of the revolt of the fleet at Misenum gave him a pretext for returning to Rome; he there learned further that the people of Puteoli and other towns had joined in the revolt, and the officer, whom he sent to recall the soldiers to their duty, declared for Vespasian and occupied Tarracina.

* "Umbraculis hortorum abditus, (ut ignava animalia, quibus si cibum suggeras, jacent torpentque,) præterita, instantia, futura pari oblivione dimiserat." Tacitus.

The disgraceful departure of Vitellius emboldened the peoples of the Sabellian race to manifest their inclination to the Flavian cause. Antonius also, though the weather was foul and the snow deep, crossed the Apennines, which he never perhaps could have achieved had Vitellius been other than he was, and advanced along the Flaminian road. On the way he was met by Petillius Cerialis, an able officer and a connexion of Vespasian's, who had escaped from confinement in the garb of a peasant. Cerialis was forthwith associated in the command of the army, which encamped at Carsulæ (*S. Germini*), within ten miles of the Vitellians, who were at Narnia. Here the Flavians were joined by the troops from Verona. Desertion soon spread among the Vitellians, and when the head of Valens, who had been put to death at Urbino, was brought and shown to them, they gave up all hopes, and consented to declare for Vespasian. Frequent messages were at this time sent by the Flavian generals to Vitellius, offering him a large income and a retreat in Campania, if he would give over the contest. Mucianus wrote to the same effect; and Vitellius was beginning to speak of the number of slaves he should require and the place he should select: for, as Tacitus says, "such a torpor had seized his mind, that if others had not remembered that he was an emperor, he would have forgotten it himself."

The prefect of the city at this time was Flavius Sabinus, the elder brother of Vespasian; for a generous or prudent policy of sparing the relatives of each other, of which Otho had set the example, prevailed among the rival candidates for empire. Vespasian's younger son, Domitianus, was also at Rome and in safety. Sabinus was strongly urged, by the principal persons in the city, to put himself at the head of the Urban cohorts and the watchmen, with their own slaves, and seize the city for his brother; but he was a man of mild temper and averse from civil bloodshed; he therefore preferred the way of negotiation: he had several private meetings with Vitellius, and they finally came to an arrangement in the temple of Apollo, it was said, in the presence of two witnesses. Vitellius' friends, when they heard of it, did all in their power to make him break the agreement, but to no purpose. On the 18th of December, when news came of the defection of the troops at Narnia, he came down from the palace clad in black, having his young son in a litter with him, and addressed the people and soldiery in the Forum, telling them

that he retired for the sake of peace and the republic; and commending to them his family. He then, in token of his resignation, handed his dagger to the consul, who declined to receive it. He moved toward the temple of Concord, to deposit his ensigns there, and then retire to the adjoining house of his brother; but the people and the German soldiers opposed his passage, and forced him to return to the palace.

The principal persons of both orders, hearing that Vitellius had abdicated, had repaired to the house of Sabinus, where the Urban cohorts and the watchmen were also assembled. When they heard of the conduct of the populace and the German cohorts, feeling that they had gone too far to recede, they resolved to have recourse to arms. A skirmish speedily took place with some of the Vitellians, in which they were worsted, and Sabinus then retired to the Capitol, with his soldiers and some of the knights and senators. During the night, as the guard of the Vitellians was slack, he caused his children and his nephew to be brought thither, and at the same time he sent to apprise the Flavian generals of his situation.

As soon as it was light Sabinus sent a centurion to remonstrate with Vitellius on his breach of faith. Vitellius attempted to excuse himself, by declaring his want of power to restrain his soldiers. The centurion was obliged to retire by the rear of the house to elude them, and he had hardly returned to the Capitol when they advanced to the assault. They assailed the portico of the temple with flaming brands; Sabinus caused the statues to be all pulled down and piled up behind the doors to serve as a barrier. They then made their attacks at all the approaches, especially that by the Asylum. The edifice at length burst into flames, whether fired by the besieged or the besiegers was uncertain, and thus was the temple of the tutelar deities of Rome destroyed for the second time, in the midst of civil commotions. Undaunted by the flames, the Vitellians rushed in: few of the defenders made resistance, most sought to escape in various ways, and generally with success. Domitian was concealed by the keeper of the temple, and next day he got away, disguised as one of the ministers of Isis. Sabinus and the consul Atticus were seized and dragged into the presence of Vitellius. In vain the powerless emperor wished to save the former: he was murdered before his eyes. Atticus escaped by declaring that it was he himself that had fired the temple.

The Flavians were keeping the Saturnalia, at Otriculum,

when they heard of the late events at Rome. Cerialis advanced immediately, with a body of a thousand horse, in order to enter the city by the Salarian road, while Antonius led the remainder of the army along the Flaminian. The night was far gone, when, at Saxa-rubra, the latter was informed of the burning of the Capitol and the death of Sabinus. Cerialis, when he approached the city, was repulsed and driven back to Fidenæ; and the populace, elated at this success of their party, took up arms for Vitellius and demanded to be led to battle. He thanked them for their zeal, but he preferred negotiation to arms. He sent deputies to both Cerialis and Antonius, and the Vestal Virgins were the bearers of a letter to the latter. The holy maidens were treated with all due respect, but the answer returned to Vitellius was, that the murder of Sabinus and the burning of the Capitol had put an end to all hopes of peace.

Antonius having made a fruitless effort to induce the troops to halt for one day at the Mulvian bridge, they advanced to the assault in three bodies along the Tiber and the Salarian and Flaminian roads. The Vitellians opposed them vigorously at all points; success was various, but fortune mostly favoured the Flavians. The people looked on, as if it had been the sports of the amphitheatre, cheering the victors, and requiring those who sought refuge any where to be dragged out and slain. They also plundered the dead. In some parts of the city there were the flashing of arms and the sounds of combat; while in others, the usual course of debauchery was going on, and the baths and the taverns were filled with their daily visitors. It was at the prætorian camp that the battle raged the loudest. Pride urged the old prætorians to recover their camp; their successors were determined to die rather than yield it up. Every kind of engine was employed against it; at length an entrance was forced, and all its defenders were slain.

When the city was taken, Vitellius had himself conveyed in a sedan to the house of his wife, on the Aventine, intending to steal away during the night, to Tarracina, which his brother had recovered. But he changed his mind, and returned to the palace. He found it deserted; and as he roamed its empty halls, his spirit failed, and he concealed himself in the porter's lodge, hiding under the bed and bedclothes. Here he was found and dragged out by a Flavian tribune. His hands were tied behind his back, a rope was put about his neck, his

robe was torn, a sword was set under his chin to make him hold up his head; some reviled him, others pelted him with mud and dirt. He was thus led along the Sacred Way, and at the Gemonian stairs he was hacked to death, and his body was then dragged away and flung into the Tiber.

CHAPTER II.*

THE FLAVIAN FAMILY.

A.U. 823-849. A.D. 70-96.

State of Affairs at Rome.—German War.—Capture and Destruction of Jerusalem.—Return of Titus.—Vespasian—Character of his Government—His Death.—Titus—His Character and Reign.—Public Calamities.—Death of Titus.—Domitian—His Character.—Conquest of Britain.—Dacian War.—Other Wars.—Cruelty of Domitian—His Death.—Literature of this period.

T. Flavius Sabinus Vespasianus.

A.U. 823-832. A.D. 70-79.

THE death of Vitellius terminated the civil war, but it did not yet restore tranquillity to the empire. Rome presented the appearance of a conquered city. The victorious Flavians pursued and slaughtered the Vitellians in all quarters; houses were broken open and robbed, and their owners, if they resisted, were murdered. Complaint and lamentation were heard on all sides. The generals were unable to restrain their men, and the evil was left to exhaust itself. The troops were soon however led as far as Bovillæ and Aricia, to oppose L. Vitellius, who was reported to be on his march against the city, but he and his cohorts surrendered at discretion, and he was led to Rome and put to death. The same was the fate of a few more of the friends of Vitellius, among whom may be mentioned his freedman Asiaticus. Some persons were prosecuted and punished for their acts in the time of Nero, among whom it is gratifying to mention the philosopher Egnatius Celer, the friend and prosecutor of Soranus†.

The senate decreed all the usual imperial honours to Vespasian.

* Authorities: Suetonius and Dion.

† Above, p. 106.

pasian, the consulship for the ensuing year to him, to his eldest son the prætorship, and the consular authority to Domitian. The consular ensigns were decreed to Antonius Primus, the prætorian to Cornelius Fuscus and Arrius Varus, and the triumphal to Mucianus, for his success against the Sarmatians. The supreme power lay nominally with Domitian, but its reality was in the hands of Antonius, from whom however it passed to Mucianus, who speedily arrived. Mucianus acted in all things as if he were a partner of the empire; Domitian also exercised such imperial power, that his father, it is said, wrote to him one time, saying, "I thank you, son, for allowing me to reign, and for not having deposed me."

Vespasian did not arrive at Rome till toward the end of the year. As the Roman arms were at this time occupied by two distinct enemies in different parts of the world, the Germans and the Jews, and both wars were concluded in this year, we will here briefly notice them.

The origin of the German war was as follows: The Batavians, a tribe of the Cattans, being expelled from their original seats, had settled in the north-eastern extremity of Gaul, and in the island formed by the branches of the Rhine. They were in alliance with the Romans, on the usual terms, and therefore supplied them with troops; their cavalry, from its activity and the skill and boldness with which it was known to cross the deepest and most rapid rivers, was always greatly prized in the Roman service; and the Batavian cohorts had very much distinguished themselves both in Britain and at Bedriacum. Two brothers, named Julius Paulus and Claudius Civilis, had held of late the chief command of the Batavian troops. The former was put to death by Fonteius Capito, on a false charge of disaffection in the time of Nero, and the latter was sent in chains to Rome. He was acquitted by Galba, but he ran fresh danger from Vitellius, as the army was clamorous for his execution. He however escaped, and returned to his own country, where, under the pretence of acting for Vespasian, he prepared to cast off the Roman yoke. He first induced the Batavians to refuse the levy ordered by Vitellius, and then proposed to the Canninifates, a neighbouring people, to join the league; he also sent to solicit the Batavian cohorts, that had been sent back from Bedriacum and were now at Mentz (*Magontiacum*). The Canninifates choosing one of their nobles, named Briuno, for their leader,

and having associated with them the trans-rhenic Frisians, attacked and took the winter-camp of two cohorts on the sea-coast. Civilis at first pretended great zeal for the Romans, but when he found that his designs were seen through, he joined Brinno openly, and their united forces, aided by the treachery of a Tungrian cohort and of the Batavian rowers in the ships, succeeded in defeating a body of Roman troops, and capturing their fleet of four-and-twenty vessels. Hordeonius ordered Lupercus, one of his legates, to march against the rebels with two legions, Ubian and Trevirian auxiliaries, and some Batavian cavalry. Lupercus therefore crossed the river; Civilis gave him battle; in the midst of the engagement the Batavian horse went over to their countrymen; the auxiliaries fled in confusion, and the legionaries were obliged to take refuge in the Old-camp.

Meantime a messenger from Civilis had overtaken the Batavian cohorts that were on their march for Italy. They immediately began, as a pretext for defection, to demand a donative, double pay, and other advantages promised by Vitellius; and Hordeonius having tried in vain to satisfy them, they set out to join Civilis. Hordeonius then resolving to have recourse to force, sent orders to Herennius Gallus, who commanded at Bonn (*Bonna*) to stop them in front while he himself should press on their rear. He soon however changed his mind, and sent word to Herennius to let them pass. But the latter yielded to the instances of his men, and led out his forces of 3000 legionaries, some Belgian cohorts, and a train of camp-followers, against the Batavians. The latter, inferior in number but superior in discipline, drove them back with great slaughter to their camp, and then, continuing their route without further molestation, joined Civilis.

The arrival of these veteran cohorts inspired Civilis with confidence; but still aware of the power of Rome, he made all his men take the oath of fidelity to Vespasian. He sent to invite the two legions in the Old-camp to do the same, but meeting with a scornful refusal, he resolved to attack them without further delay. He had now been joined by some of the Germans, and his army was numerous. On the other hand the Romans did not exceed 5000 men, and they had to defend a camp made for two legions. A general assault was at first tried, and when it did not succeed, Civilis, aware that the supply of provisions in the camp was very short, resolved to trust to the surer course of blockade. But vast

numbers of Germans having now flocked to him, to gratify their ardour he tried another assault. It, however, also failed, and he then resumed the blockade. Meantime he ceased not to urge by letters the people of Gaul to insurrection, and disaffection in consequence prevailed extensively throughout that country.

Hordeonius, unable to control the mutinous spirit of his troops, gave the command of the force which he sent to raise the siege of the Old-camp to the legate Dillius Vocola. This officer advanced as far as Gelduba, and there encamped. Meantime tidings of the battle of Cremona arrived, and on the receipt of letters from Antonius Primus, with an edict of Cæcina as consul, Hordeonius made his men take the oath to Vespasian. An envoy was then sent to Civilis, to inform him that he had now no further pretext for war, and to require him to lay down his arms. He however refused, and he sent off the veteran cohorts with the Germans to attack the forces at Gelduba, while he himself remained to keep up the blockade of the Old-camp. These troops came so suddenly on Vocola that he had not time to draw out his men, and the cowardice or defection of some Nervian cohorts aiding the enemy, they were on the very point of obtaining a complete victory, when some Gascon cohorts came suddenly up and fell on their rear. The Batavians taking them for the entire Roman army, lost courage, and being now assailed in front and rear, were put to flight with loss. Vocola then marched to the relief of the Old-camp. Civilis gave him battle in front of it, but a sally of the besieged, and a fall of Civilis himself from his horse, and a report that he was slain or wounded, damped the spirit of his men, and Vocola forced his way into the camp, which he secured with additional works. A convoy, which he sent to fetch corn from Novesium, being attacked on its return by Civilis, and forced to take refuge in the camp at Gelduba, he drew a good part of the troops out of the Old-camp, and went with them to their relief. Civilis then renewed the siege of the Old-camp; and when Vocola went on to Novesium, the Batavian general captured Gelduba, and then came off victorious in a cavalry-action near Novesium. Mutiny now prevailed to a great extent in the Roman army. Hordeonius was murdered by his own men, and Vocola had to make his escape disguised as a slave.

The success of Civilis, and the intelligence of the taking of Rome, and the death of Vitellius, excited the Gauls to think

of asserting their independence. Classicus, the commander of the Trevirian cavalry, opened a correspondence with Civilis. Julius Tutor, the prefect of the bank of the Rhine, and Julius Sabinus, a leading man among the Lingonians, joined with Classicus, and measures were taken to ensure the cooperation of their countrymen. Vocula had information of their plans, but he felt himself too weak to oppose them, and he affected to give credit to their protestations of fidelity. When, however, he marched to the relief of the Old-camp, Classicus and Tutor, having arranged matters with Civilis, formed their camp apart from that of the legions. Vocula, having vainly essayed to reduce them to obedience, led, as we have seen, his army back to Novesium. The Gauls encamped two miles off, and (strange and novel event!) Classicus and Tutor succeeded in inducing the Roman soldiers to declare against their own country, and abandon their general. Vocula was murdered by a deserter from the first legion, his legates were confined; Classicus entered the camp with imperial ensigns, and the soldiers took the oath to the empire of the Gauls. The troops in the Old-camp, worn out with famine, now surrendered; all the winter-quarters near the Rhine, except those at Mentz and Windisch (*Vindonissa*) were burnt; Cologne and other towns submitted to the conquerors; the Gallic nations, however, with the exception of the Trevirians and Lingonians, and a few others, remained faithful to Rome. Sabinus, causing himself to be proclaimed Cæsar, invaded the territory of the Sequanians, but his disorderly levies were totally routed, and he himself flying to one of his country-seats, burned it over his head, that it might be believed that he had perished, while he reserved himself for better times*.

Such was the state of affairs when Cerialis came from Rome to conduct the German war. He fixed his head quarters at Mentz, and the success of his first operations checked the progress of the rebellion. He thence advanced to Treves, where Civilis and Classicus, having in vain solicited him to assume the empire of the Gauls, resolved to give him battle. Early in the morning a sudden attack was made on the Ro-

* His place of refuge was a subterraneous cavern, where he remained concealed for nine years. His wife (who bore him two children in the cavern) and two of his freedmen alone knew of his retreat. He was at length discovered, and led to Rome, where Vespasian, with a harshness unusual to him, caused both him and his wife to be executed. Dion, lxi. 16. Plut. Amat. p. 1372.

man camp by a combined army of Gauls, Germans and Batavians. Cerialis, who had lain out of the camp, hastened to it, unarmed as he was, and found his men giving way on all sides. By great personal exertions he restored the battle, and the enemy was at length forced to retire. Civilis then having received fresh troops from Germany, took his position at the Old-camp. Cerialis, who had also been reinforced by two legions, followed him thither. Civilis gave him battle; the contest was long doubtful; at length the treachery of a Batavian, who deserted and conducted a body of Roman-horse into the rear of Civilis' army decided the fortune of the day. Civilis then retired with Classicus, Tutor, and some of the principal men of the Trevirians into the Batavian island, whither Cerialis, for want of shipping, could not pursue them; and issuing thence again, they attacked the Romans in various places, who in turn passed over to the island and ravaged it. The approach of winter, during which the toil of carrying on a war amidst bogs and marshes would be intolerable, disposed Cerialis to seek an accommodation, to which Civilis, who saw that his countrymen were weary of war, was equally well inclined. The two leaders had an interview to arrange the terms. Civilis received a pardon; the confederates were released from all demands of tribute, and only required to supply troops as heretofore.

While such was the state of affairs in the west, Titus had brought the Jewish war to a fortunate conclusion.

The Jews, as we have seen, had been for some years under the government of a Roman president. Those selected for that office, such as Felix and Festus, had been usually tyrannic and avaricious men, and they oppressed the people beyond measure. On the other hand, the Jews, in reliance on the words of their prophets, looked every day for the appearance of their conquering Messiah, who was not merely to deliver them from bondage, but to make them lords and rulers over all nations. They also believed that they were forbidden by their law to submit to the rule of a stranger. From all these causes insurrections were frequent in Judæa, and they were punished with great severity in the usual Roman manner. Bands of robbers swarmed in the country, among whom were particularly remarkable those called Sicarians, from the dagger (*sica*) which they carried concealed in their garments, and with which they used secretly to stab their enemies even in the open day, in the streets, and chiefly at the time of the

great festivals. In some points they seem to have resembled the Assassins of a far later period. False prophets were also continually appearing and leading the people into destruction.

In the eleventh year of Nero (63) Gessius Florus was appointed procurator of Judæa. The tyranny which he exercised passed all endurance, and in the second year of his government (64) the whole Jewish nation took up arms against the dominion of Rome. The Roman garrison of Jerusalem was massacred; on the other hand great numbers of Jews were slaughtered at Cæsarea and Alexandria, and they in their turn destroyed Samaria, Askalon, and several other towns. Cestius Gallus, the governor of Syria, seeing that matters had assumed so serious a form, entered the country at the head of a large army, and advanced as far as Jerusalem; but being foiled in the first attempts which he made on that city, instead of persevering, when, according to the most competent authority, he could have taken the city and prevented all the future calamities, he drew off his army and retired with disgrace. The Jews forthwith began to prepare for the war, which they now saw to be inevitable. They appointed military governors for all the provinces, among whom was Josephus, the historian of the war, to whom was given the province of Galilee.

When Nero was informed by Cestius of the state of affairs in Judæa, he saw the necessity of committing the conduct of the war to a man of military talent and experience. The person on whom he fixed was Vespasian, who had already distinguished himself both in Germany and Britain. Vespasian set forth without delay, proceeding overland to Syria, while he sent his son Titus to Egypt, to lead to him two legions from that province. At Antioch he received from Mucianus, then president of Syria, one legion; and when joined by his son, he found himself at the head of an army of about 60,000 men, including the auxiliary troops of the different Asiatic princes and states.

The Roman army rendezvoused at Ptolemais (*Acre*), whence it advanced into Galilee (65). The city of Gadara was taken at the first assault; and Vespasian then laid siege to Jotopata, the strongest place in the province, and of which Josephus himself conducted the defence. The Jews, favoured by the natural strength of the place, made a most gallant resistance; but on the forty-seventh day of the siege a traitor revealed to Vespasian the secret of the actual weakness of the garrison, and showed how the town might be surprised. The city ac-

cordingly fell, and an indiscriminate massacre was made of all the male inhabitants. Josephus became a prisoner to the Roman general, by whom he was treated with much consideration; and he thus had the excellent opportunity, of which he availed himself, for relating the events of the war.

Few other places in Galilee offered resistance: the towns on the coast were all in the hands of the Romans; Vespasian had advanced southwards and placed garrisons in Jericho, and other towns round Jerusalem, and he was preparing to lay siege to that city when he received intelligence of the death of Nero (68). He then put aside all thoughts of the siege for the present, waiting to see what course events would take in Italy, and retired to Casarea for the winter. In the spring (69) he had resumed operations against the Jews, when news came of the battle of Bedriacum, and the elevation of Vitellius to the empire. We have already related what thence resulted, and the consequent suspension of the Jewish war.

Vespasian was at Alexandria when he heard of the death of Vitellius, and of himself being declared emperor by the senate. He resolved now to prosecute the Jewish war, and Titus having left Egypt and proceeded to Casarea early in the spring (70), and being there joined by the remainder of the army destined for the siege of Jerusalem, advanced against the devoted city at the head of an army composed of four legions, with their due number of cohorts and auxiliaries. As the festival of the Passover occurred about this time, the city was thronged with an immense number of people from all parts of Judæa, and the Jewish nation was thus, as it were, enveloped in the net of destruction.

Of no siege in ancient times have the events been transmitted with the same degree of minuteness as of that of Jerusalem; for Josephus, the historian of them, was a Jew of noble birth, and he was present in the Roman camp, and on a footing of friendship with Titus. Versed in both the Greek and Hebrew languages, and acquainted personally with the principal persons on both sides, he had the opportunity of learning the exact truth of every event, and his veracity has never been called in question. As the destruction of Jerusalem was accurately foretold by the divine Author of our religion, the narrative of the siege possesses additional importance in the eyes of all Christians. The proper place, however, for the detailed narration of it is the History of the Jews: in the limits to which the present work is necessarily restricted, we feel it

impossible to give such an account as would content the reasonable curiosity of the reader, and shall therefore only aim at a general view of this ruin of the Jewish nation.

The great body of the people of Jerusalem were anxious to submit to the Romans, and Titus, on his part, would most willingly have granted them favourable terms. But all the robbers and Sicarians had repaired to the city, and under the name of Zealots, they seized on the whole power. They were divided into three hostile parties, having but one principle in common, namely to oppose the Romans, and to oppress and murder the unhappy people. In their madness they early destroyed the greater part of the magazines of corn, and famine soon began to spread its ravages. The sufferings of the people were beyond description ; if they remained in the city, they perished of hunger ; if they were caught attempting to escape from it, they were barbarously massacred by the Zealots ; if they succeeded in making their escape, they were murdered by the Syrians and Arabians in the Roman army for the sake of the gold which it was discovered they used to swallow.

The siege lasted for nearly seven months. The Romans had to carry each of the three walls, and all the quarters of the city successively. Titus was anxious to save the magnificent temple of the God of Israel, but one of the Roman soldiers set fire to it, and the stately edifice became a prey to the flames. The Upper City, as it was named, was still defended, but the Romans finally carried it, and the whole city, with the exception of three of the towers, left to show its former strength, was demolished. Josephus computes the number of those who perished in the siege and capture of the city at 1,100,000, and those who were made prisoners during the war at 97,000 persons. Of these, those under seventeen years of age were sold for slaves ; of the rest, some were sent to the provinces to fight with each other, or with wild beasts, for the amusement of the people in the theatres ; the greater part were condemned to work in the quarries of Egypt.

On the occasion of the conquest of Jerusalem Titus was in the ancient manner saluted Imperator by his soldiers, and when he was about to depart from the province, they insisted that he should either remain or take them with him. This, combined with the circumstance of his wearing a diadem (though according to the established usage), some time after, when consecrating the holy calf Apis at Memphis in Egypt, gave occasion to a suspicion that he meditated to revolt from his father and esta-

blish a kingdom for himself in the East. He therefore lost no time in repairing to Italy, whither Vespasian had proceeded long before. When he arrived unexpectedly at Rome, he addressed his father in these words, "I am come, father, I am come," to show the absurdity of the reports respecting him. Vespasian, however, knew his noble son too well to have had any suspicion of him. He celebrated with him a joint triumph for the conquest of Judæa; he made him his colleague in the censorship, the tribunate, and seven consulates, and gave him the command of the prætorian cohorts. He transferred to him most of the business of the state, authorising him to write letters and issue edicts in his name. He in effect made him his colleague in the empire, and he never had occasion for one moment to regret his confidence.

Titus Flavius Vespasianus, the present ruler of the Roman world, was somewhat past his sixtieth year when called to the empire. He was born near Reate, in the Sabine country, of a family which was merely respectable. He commenced his public life as a tribune in the army in Thrace; he rose to the rank of prætor, and he served as a legate in Germany and Britain, in which last country he distinguished himself greatly as a general, and was honoured with the triumphal ensigns, and he afterwards obtained the government of Africa. Finally, as we have seen, he was selected for the conduct of the Jewish war. In all the offices which he held Vespasian had behaved with justice, honour, and humanity, and there was perhaps no man at the time better calculated for the important post of head of the Roman empire.

The first cares of Vespasian were directed to the restoration of discipline in the army, and of order in the finances. He discharged a great part of the Vitellian soldiers, and he treated his own with strictness, not giving them even their just rewards for some time, to make them sensible of his authority. In consequence of the wasteful extravagance of Nero, and the late civil wars, the revenues of the state were in such a condition, that Vespasian declared, on his accession, that no less a sum than 40,000,000,000 sesterces were absolutely requisite to carry on the government. He therefore re-established all the taxes that Galba had remitted, and imposed new ones; he increased, and in some cases doubled the tributes of the provinces; he even engaged in various branches of traffic, buying low and selling high. He was accused of selling places and pardons, and of making procurators of those known to be

most rapacious, that he might condemn them when they were grown rich, "using them," as it was said, "as sponges, wetting them when dry, and squeezing them out when wet."

Granting, however, that Vespasian was rapacious of money, it was not to hoard it or to squander it on pleasures. He was liberal both to the public and to all orders of the people. He rebuilt the Capitol, and he collected copies of the brazen tablets (three thousand in number) of the *senatus-consults* and *plebiscits*, which had been melted in the conflagration. He built a temple with a Forum to Peace, and one to the emperor Claudius, and commenced an amphitheatre which had been designed by Augustus. He gave large sums to various cities which had suffered from fires or earthquakes. He settled annual pensions on those men of consular rank who were in narrow circumstances. He was liberal to poets, rhetoricians and artists of all kinds.

Early in his reign Vespasian made a diligent examination of the senatorian and equestrian orders. He expelled the more unworthy members of both, and supplied their places with the most respectable of the Italians and the provincials. He seems in this to have been actuated by his military notions of the unity and identity which should pervade the empire, for the superiority of the Roman citizens was thus taken away, the path to all honours now lying equally open to the provincials. It was probably the same principle that caused him to deprive Lycia, Cilicia, Thrace, Rhodes, Samos, and other places of the independence which they had hitherto enjoyed, and reduced them to the form of provinces.

The emperor was never ashamed of the humbleness of his origin, and he laughed at those who attempted to deduce the Flavian family from one of the companions of Hercules. He retained no enmities; he procured a very high match for the daughter of Vitellius, and gave her a dowry and outfit. When warned to beware of Metius Pomposianus, who was said to have an imperial nativity, he made him consul. Even during the civil war he omitted the practice of searching those who came to salute the emperor. The doors of the palace stood always open, and there was no guard at them. He constantly had the senators and other persons of respectability to dine with him, and he dined with them in return. In his mode of living he was simple and temperate.

Vespasian banished the philosophers and the astrologers from Rome. These last were extremely mischievous, meddling in all affairs of state, and they had been objects of sus-

picion ever since the time of Augustus. In his proceedings against the philosophers he was actuated by Mucianus, who represented to him that the Stoics were dangerous as republicans, and the Cynics as the enemies of decency and morality. The death of Helvidius Priscus, which is esteemed a stain on the memory of Vespasian, may be ascribed to his Stoicism and republicanism. When the emperor came to Rome, Helvidius addressed him as plain Vespasian; in his edicts as prætor he treated him with neglect and disrespect; and in the senate behaved toward him with such insolence that he quitted the house in tears. Helvidius was relegated, and finally put to death, we know not on what account; but Vespasian is said to have sent to countermand the order when it was too late.

Toward the end of his reign a conspiracy was formed against him by Cæcina and Marcellus, both of whom stood high in his friendship, and had received all the honours of the state. The plot being discovered, Cæcina was seized as he was coming out from dining with the emperor, and put to death by the orders of Titus, lest he should raise a disturbance in the night, as he had gained over several of the soldiers. Marcellus, being condemned by the senate, cut his own throat with a razor.

Vespasian was but once married. His wife having died long before he came to the empire, he lived with Cænis, the freedwoman of Antonia, whom he treated as a wife rather than a mistress. He allowed her to make traffic of the offices of the state, by which she amassed large sums of money, and the emperor was suspected of sharing in her gains.

This able prince had nearly completed the tenth year of his reign when he was attacked by a feverish complaint in Campania. He returned to the city, and thence hastened to his native Sabine land about Cutiliæ and Reate, where he was in the habit of spending the summer, and tried the cold springs of the place, but without effect. He attended to public business to the last: when he felt the approach of death, "An emperor," said he, "should die standing;" and being supported in that posture, he met his fate in the seventieth year of his age.

T. Flavius Sabinus Vespasianus II.

A.U. 832-834. A.D. 79-81.

Titus Flavius Vespasianus was born in the year of the death of the emperor Caius. He was brought up at the court of Claudius as the companion of the young Britannicus. When he grew up he served as a tribune in Germany and Britain, and he afterwards held a high command in the army of Judæa. In person Titus was rather short, with a projecting stomach. He was eminently accomplished in all martial exercises; he had a remarkable memory; could make verses *extempore* in either Greek or Latin; and was well-skilled in music. He could imitate any hand-writing; and, as he said himself, wanted only the will to be the most expert of forgers.

Many people feared that Titus might prove a second Nero. He was accused of having put various persons to death in the late reign, and of having taken money from others for his interest with his father. His revels, prolonged till midnight, gave occasion to suspicions of luxury; and the crowds of eunuchs, and such like persons about him, excited suspicions of a darker hue. People also feared that he would espouse (contrary to Roman usage) the Jewish queen Berenice, who had followed him to Rome and lived with him in the palace, acting as if she were already empress.

All these fears were however agreeably disappointed, and Titus when emperor acted in such a manner as to be justly named the Love and Delight of Mankind. He sent away the fair Jewish queen, though it cost him a severe struggle*. He reduced his train of eunuchs; he retrenched the luxury of his table; he selected his friends from among the best men of the time. In liberality no one surpassed him; while preceding princes used to regard the gifts of their predecessors as invalid unless they were given over again by themselves, Titus unsolicited confirmed by one edict all the preceding grants. He could not bear to refuse any one; and when those about him observed that he promised more than he could perform, he replied, "No one ought to retire dissatisfied from the presence of the prince." At dinner one time, recollecting that he had done nothing for any one that day, he cried, "Friends, I have lost a day."

When he took the office of chief pontiff, he declared that he did it that he might keep his hands free from blood; and

* "*Berenicen statim ab urbe dimisit invitus invitam.*"—Suet. Tit. 7.

during his reign not a single person was put to death. Though his brother was incessantly conspiring against him, he could not be induced to treat him with rigour. When two patricians had been convicted of a conspiracy against him, he contented himself with exhorting them to desist, for that the empire was given by fate. He even despatched couriers to assure the mother of one of them of her son's safety; and he invited them to dinner, and treated them with the utmost confidence. He constantly said that he would rather die than cause the death of any one*.

Titus would never allow any prosecutions on the charge of treason. "I," said he, "cannot be injured or insulted, for I do nothing deserving of reproach, and I care not for those who speak falsely; and as for the departed emperors, if they are in reality demigods and have power, they will avenge themselves on those who injure them." He was very severe against the informers; he caused them to be beaten with rods and cudgels, led through the amphitheatre, and then be sold for slaves or confined in the most rugged islands.

The reign of this excellent prince was marked by a series of public calamities. He had reigned only two months when a tremendous volcanic eruption, the first on record, from mount Vesuvius spread dismay through Italy. This mountain had hitherto formed the most beautiful feature in the landscape of Campania, being clad with vines and other agreeable trees and plants. Earthquakes had of late years been of frequent occurrence; but on the 24th of August the summit of the mountain sent forth a volume of flame, stones and ashes which spread devastation far and wide. The sky to the extent of many leagues was enveloped in the gloom of night; the fine dust it was asserted was wafted even to Egypt and Syria†; and at Rome it rendered the sun invisible for many days. Men and beasts, birds and fishes perished alike. The adjoining towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum were overwhelmed by the irruption and the earthquake which attended it, and their inhabitants destroyed‡. Among those who lost their lives on this occasion was Pliny, the great naturalist. He commanded the fleet at Misenum, and his curiosity lead-

* "Peritulum se potius quam perditulum."—Suet. Tit. 9.

† In the eruption of Mount Hecla, Sept. 2, 1845, the Orkneys were covered with the dust from it.

‡ Dion Cass. lxi. 22, 23. Plin. Ep. vi. 20. Sil. Ital. xvii. 596. Val. Flac. iv. 509.

ing him to proceed to Stabiae to view this convulsion of nature more closely, he was suffocated by the pestilential air.

Titus did all in his power to alleviate this great calamity. But while on account of it he was absent in Campania (80), a fire broke out at Rome which raged for three days and nights, and destroyed the Septa, the baths of Agrippa, the Pantheon, the rebuilt Capitol, and a number of the other public buildings. This was succeeded by a pestilence, probably the consequence of the eruption of Vesuvius, which swept away numbers of people. The emperor undertook to restore the city at his own expense, refusing all the presents that were offered him for that purpose. He completed a splendid amphitheatre, commenced by his father*, and built the baths which bear his name. At the dedication of these works he gave magnificent games to the people.

In the September of the following year (81) the reign and life of this excellent prince came to their close. At the termination of one of the public spectacles he was observed to burst into tears in presence of the people. Some ill omens disturbed him, and he set out for the Sabine country. On the first stage he was attacked by a fever; and as he was proceeding in his litter it is said that he looked at the sky and lamented that life should be taken from him undeservedly, as there was but one act he ever did to be repented of†. He died at the country-house in which his father had so lately expired. Domitian was suspected, though apparently without reason, of having caused his death. Titus was only in his forty-first year, and had reigned little more than two years; fortunate perhaps in this, for as Dion observes, had he lived longer his fame might not have been so pure.

T. Flavius Sabinus Domitianus.

A.U. 834-849. [A.D. 81-96.]

Titus Flavius Sabinus Domitianus was the younger son of Vespasian. He was born in the year 51; his youth was not reputable, and when after the death of Vitellius he exercised the supreme power at Rome, he gave free course to his evil propensities. Among other acts, he took Domitia Calvina, the daughter of the celebrated Corbulo, from her husband

* The Colosseum.

† What that act was no one knew; and none of the conjectures are very probable.

Ælius Læmia, and made her his own wife. After the return of his father to Rome he passed his time mostly in seclusion at his residence at the Alban mount, devoting himself to poetry, in which he made no mean progress. When his father died he had some thoughts of offering a double donative to the soldiers, and claiming the empire; and as long as his brother lived he was conspiring openly or secretly against him. Ere Titus had breathed his last, Domitian made every one abandon him, and mounting his horse rode to the prætorian camp, and caused himself to be saluted emperor by the soldiers.

Like most bad emperors, Domitian commenced his reign with popular actions, and a portion of his good qualities adhered to him for some time. Such were his liberality (for no man was freer from avarice) and the strictness with which he looked after the administration of justice, both at Rome and in the provinces. His passion for building was extreme; not content with restoring the Capitol, the Pantheon, and other edifices injured or destroyed by the conflagration in the time of Nero, and by the late one, he built or repaired several others; and on all, old and new alike, he inscribed his own name, without noticing the original founder.

Domitian was of a moody melancholy temper, and he loved to indulge in solitude. His chief occupation when thus alone we are told was to catch flies, and pierce them with a sharp writing-style; hence Vibius Crispus, being asked one day if there was any one within with Cæsar, replied, "No, not so much as a fly." Among the better actions of the early years of this prince, may be noticed the following. He strictly forbade the abominable practice of making eunuchs, for which he deserves praise; though it was said that his motive was not so much a love of justice as a desire to depreciate the memory of his brother, who had a partiality for these wretched beings. Domitian also at this time punished three Vestals who had broken their vows of chastity; but instead of burying them alive, he allowed them to choose their mode of death.

In the hope of acquiring military glory, he undertook (83) an expedition to Germany, under the pretence of chastising the Cattans. But he merely crossed the Rhine, pillaged the friendly tribes beyond it, and then without having even seen the face of an enemy returned to Rome, and celebrated the triumph which the senate had decreed him, dragging as

captives slaves that he had purchased and disguised as Germans. While however he was thus triumphing for imaginary conquests, real ones had been achieved in Britain by Cn. Julius Agricola, to whom Vespasian had committed the affairs of that island (80). He had conquered the country as far as the firths of Clyde and Forth, and (85) defeated the Caledonians in a great battle at the foot of the Grampians. Domitian, though inwardly grieved, affected great joy at the success of Agricola; he caused triumphal honours, a statue, and so forth to be decreed him by the senate, and gave out that he intended appointing him to the government of Syria; but when Agricola returned to Rome, he received him with coldness, and never employed him again*.

The country on the left bank of the lower Danube, the modern Transylvania, Wallachia and Moldavia was at this time inhabited by a portion of the Sarmatian or Slavonian race named the Dacians, and remarkable for their valour. The extension of the Roman frontier to the Danube in the time of Augustus, had caused occasional collisions with this martial race†; but no war of any magnitude had occurred till the present reign. The prince of the Dacians at this time, named Decebalus, was one of those energetic characters often to be found among barbarous tribes, to whom nature has given all the elements of greatness, but fortune has assigned a narrow and inglorious stage for their exhibition. It was probably the desire of military glory and of plunder, rather than fear of the avarice of Domitian, the only cause assigned‡, that made Decebalus at this time (86) set at nought the treaties subsisting with the Romans, and lead his martial hordes over the Danube. The troops that opposed them were routed and cut to pieces; the garrisons and castles were taken, and apprehensions were entertained for the winter-quarters of the legions§. The danger seemed so imminent, that the general wish was manifested for the conduct of the war being committed to Agricola; and the imperial freedmen, some from good, others from evil motives, urged their master to compliance. But his jealousy of that illustrious man was invincible; and he resolved to superintend the war in person.

* See the Life of Agricola by his son-in-law Tacitus.

† "Occidit Daci Cotisonis agmen." Hor. Carm. iii. 8. 18. Vir. Geor. ii. 497. M. Antonius asserted that Augustus had promised his daughter Julia in marriage to Cotison. Suet. Oct. 63.

‡ Jornandes De Reb. Goth. 18.

§ Tac. Agric. 41.

Domitian proceeded to Illyria, where he was met by Dacian deputies with proposals of peace, on condition of a capitation-tax of two oboles a head being paid to Decebalus. The emperor forthwith ordered Cornelius Fuscus, the governor of Illyria, to lead his army over the Danube, and chastise the insolent barbarians. Fuscus passed the river by a bridge of boats; he gained some advantages over the enemy, but his army was finally defeated and himself slain*. Domitian, who had returned to Rome, hastened back to the seat of war; but instead of heading his troops, he stopped in a town of Mœsia, where he gave himself up to his usual pleasures, leaving the conduct of the war to his generals, who, though they met with some reverses, were in general successful; and Decebalus was reduced to the necessity of suing for peace. Domitian refused to grant it; but shortly after having sustained a defeat from the Marcomans, whom he wished to punish for not having assisted him against the Dacians, he sent to offer peace to Decebalus. The Dacian was not in a condition to refuse it, but he would seem to have dictated the terms; and in effect an annual tribute was henceforth paid to him by the Roman emperor†. Domitian, however, triumphed for the Dacians and Marcomans, though he paid tribute to the former, and had been defeated by the latter‡.

During the Dacian war (88), L. Antonius, who commanded in Upper Germany, having been grossly insulted by the emperor, formed an alliance with the people named the Alemans, and caused himself to be proclaimed emperor. But L. Maximus marched against him, and the Alemans, having been prevented from coming to his aid by the rising of the Rhine, he was defeated and slain. Maximus wisely and humanely burned all his papers, but that did not prevent the tyrant from putting many persons to death as concerned in the revolt.

A war against the Sarmatians, who had cut to pieces a Roman legion, is placed by the chronologists in the year 94. Domitian conducted it in person, after his usual manner; but instead of triumphing, he contented himself with suspending a laurel-crown in the Capitol. This is the last foreign transaction of his reign.

* Juvenal, Sat. iv. 111, 112; Mart. vi. 76.

† Dion, lxxvii. 7; lxxviii. 6.

‡ There is great confusion respecting the duration of the Dacian war. Eusebius makes it end in the year 90, and places the triumph of Domitian in the following year. See Tillemont, *Hist. des Empereurs*.

After the first three or four years of his reign, the evil qualities of Domitian displayed themselves more and more every day. By nature a coward, his fears increased by his belief in the follies of astrology, rendered him cruel, and the want brought on by his extravagance made him rapacious. Informers flourished anew, as in the days of Nero; and the blind Catullus*, Messalinus, Metius Carus, and Bebius Massa, and others of the like stamp, preyed continually on the lives and fortunes of all men of rank and worth. Among the victims of the incipient cruelty of Domitian were the following: Metius Pomposianus, on account of his horoscope, and because he had in his chamber a map of the world, carried about him speeches of kings and generals out of Livy, and called his slaves Mago and Hannibal; Salvius Cocceianus, for celebrating the birthday of his uncle Otho; Sallustius Lucullus, for having given his name to a new kind of lance; the sophist Maternus, for a declamation against tyrants; and Ælius Lamia (whose wife the emperor had taken from him), for some jokes he had made in the time of Titus.

The tyranny of Domitian at length passed all bounds. Tacitus describes the senate-house as infested by soldiery; consulars slaughtered, women of the highest rank banished; the isles filled with exiles, the racks dyed with their blood; slaves and freedmen corrupted to give false evidence against their masters; nobility, wealth, honours, above all virtue, the sure causes of ruin; rewards lavished on informers and accusers; all the vices and all the virtues called into action†.

At this time Helvidius, the son of Helvidius Priscus, was put to death for having made an interlude on the emperor's divorce, of which the characters were Paris and Ænone; and Herennius Senecio, for having written the life of Helvidius Priscus. A panegyric on Thræsea and Helvidius was also fatal to its author Junius Rusticus, a stoic; and Hermogenes of Tarsus, from some supposed allusions in his history, was put to death, and the booksellers that sold it were crucified. After the condemnation of Rusticus all the philosophers were banished from Italy.

Like Nero, whom he resembled in some points, Domitian was capricious in his cruelty. When at the shows, which followed his triumph, a tempest of rain came on, he would not allow any one to quit the place and seek shelter. He himself also remained, but he had several cloaks, and changed them

* Juvenal, Sat. iv. 113 *seq.*

† Agric. 45. Hist. i. 2, 3.

as they became wet. Many of the spectators died in consequence of colds and fevers. To console them he invited them to a public supper, which lasted all through the night. He gave the senate and knights also a curious supper at the same time. The room in which he received them was made perfectly black; the seats were black; by each stood a monumental pillar with the name of the guest on it, and a sepulchral lamp; naked slaves, blackened to resemble spectres, came in and danced a horrid measure around them, and then each seated himself at the feet of a guest; the funeral-meats were then brought in black vessels. All sat quaking in silence; Domitian alone spoke, and his discourse was of death. At length he dismissed them, but at the porch, instead of their own attendants, they found strange ones, with chairs and sedans to convey them to their houses. When they were at home and began to respire freely, word came to each that one was come from the emperor; terror returned, but it was agreeably dispelled by finding that the pillar, which was silver, the supper utensils of valuable materials, and the slave who had played the ghost, were arrived as presents from the palace.

Domitian exhibited about this time a specimen of political oeconomy by no means despicable, were not the evil which he proposed to amend already beyond remedy. Wine proving very plentiful and corn very scarce in Italy, he issued an edict (92), forbidding any new vineyards to be planted in Italy, and ordering one half of those in the provinces to be cut down. This edict, it may readily be supposed, was but partially carried into effect.

The year of Domitian's triumph was also distinguished by the death of Cornelia, the eldest of the Vestals, accused of breach of chastity. She was buried alive, in the ancient manner, and underwent her cruel fate with the greatest constancy and dignity. She does not appear to have had a fair trial, and many strongly doubted of her guilt*.

The emperor, so rigorous in punishing breach of chastity in others, was as usual indulgent to himself on this head. His brother Titus had wished him to put away Domitia and marry his daughter Julia: he refused; yet when Julia was married to another, he seduced her; and when her father and husband were dead, he cohabited openly with her, and is said to have caused her death, by giving her drugs to procure abortion†.

* Plin. Ep. iv. 11.

† Suet. Dom. 22. Juvenal, Sat. ii. 83.

As for Domitia, he divorced her on account of an intrigue with Paris the actor, whom he put to death ; but he took her back soon after, pretending a willingness to gratify the desire of the people.

Domitian met with the usual fate of tyrants ; he perished by a conspiracy. It is said* that he kept under his pillow a list of those whom he intended to put to death, and that one day, as he was sleeping, a favourite little boy, who was in the room, carried it away. Domitia, meeting the child, took it from him, and, to her surprise, found her own name in it, along with those of Norbanus and Petronius, the prefects of the prætorians, Parthenius, the chamberlain, and some others. She immediately informed those concerned, and they resolved to anticipate the tyrant.

The emperor had lately put to death his cousin Clemens, one of whose freedmen, named Stephanus, who acted as steward to his wife Domitilla, being accused of malversation in his office, engaged in the conspiracy, and being a strong man, undertook the task of killing the tyrant. It was arranged that the attack should be made on him in his chamber, and Parthenius removed the sword which was usually under his pillow. Stephanus for some days previously had his arm bandaged, as if hurt, in order to be able to conceal a dagger ; and on the 18th of September (96), when Domitian, after sitting in judgement, retired to his chamber to repose, before going into the bath, Parthenius presented Stephanus to him as one who could inform him of a conspiracy. While he was reading the paper handed to him Stephanus struck him in the belly. He called out to a slave to reach him the sword that was under his pillow, but it was gone ; others of the conspirators then rushed in, and the tyrant was despatched with seven wounds. He was in the forty-fifth year of his age and the fifteenth of his reign.

The reigns of the Flavian family, and of their immediate successors, may be regarded as the last period of Roman literature. It exhibits more perhaps the decline of taste, than of

* Dion (lxvii.) says that he had heard it. Suetonius does not seem to have known it. We shall find the same told of Commodus. The circumstance is by no means improbable ; it was a list of this kind that caused the death of Aga Mohammed, the king of Persia, in 1796.

genius, as compared with the Augustan age. In its loftiest as in its meanest performances, we discern the influence of a corrupt and degenerate generation; the noble and virtuous writer describes the ruling vice with horror, while the mercenary flatterer portrays it for the gratification of his patrons.

Among the poets the first place is usually assigned to P. Papinius Statius, who wrote a poem in twelve books on the mythic wars of Thebes, and commenced another on the life and actions of Achilles. We also possess five books of *Silvæ*, or occasional poems by this writer, which are generally considered to be of more value than his *Thebais*. C. Valerius Flaccus, a poet in our opinion far superior to Statius, also selected a mythologic subject. His *Argonautics* is imperfect; but it exhibits true poetic spirit and much more originality than might have been expected. C. Silius Italicus, following the example of Ennius and Lucan in writing epic history, composed a poem in eighteen books on the second Punic war. But nature had refused him inspiration; and polished verse, close imitation of Virgil, and rhetorical expression occupy the place of poetry in his tedious work. The field of satire over which Horace had passed with such light-footed gaiety, and which Persius had trodden in the dignity of virtue, was now occupied by D. Junius Juvenalis, a writer of an ardent rhetorical spirit, who lashes vice with terrific energy and displays it in the most appalling colours, his pictures being perhaps too true to nature; but his veneration for virtue is sincere, and indignation at beholding it oppressed and vice triumphant is his Muse. M. Valerius Martialis, a Spaniard by birth, has left fourteen books of terse and pointed epigrams, in which, however, little of the poetic spirit is to be discerned.

It was also at this time that C. Cornelius Tacitus wrote his *Annals* and *Histories*, which place him on a line with Thucydides for deep insight into human nature and its springs of action. C. Suetonius Tranquillus was a diligent collector of anecdotes; his work contains no original thoughts or sentiments. M. Fabius Quintilianus, a Spaniard, a teacher of rhetoric, has left a valuable work on his art. The *Natural History* of C. Plinius Secundus is a vast repository of nearly all that was known on that subject at the time. The *Letters* of his nephew, the younger Pliny, exhibit a highly cultivated mind and a most amiable disposition.

CHAPTER III.*

NERVA. TRAJAN. HADRIAN. ANTONINUS. AURELIUS.

A.U. 849-933. A.D. 96-180.

Nerva.—Adoption of Trajan.—Trajan.—His origin and character.—Dacian wars.—Parthian wars.—Death of Trajan.—Observations.—Hadrian.—His character.—Affairs at Rome.—Hadrian in Gaul and Britain.—In Asia and Greece.—In Egypt.—Antinous.—Adoptions.—Death of Hadrian.—His character as an emperor.—Rebellion of the Jews.—Antoninus Pius.—M. Aurelius.—Parthian war.—German wars.—Revolt of Cassius.—Death of Aurelius.—His character.

M. Cocceius Nerva.

A.U. 849-851. A.D. 96-98.

THE death of Domitian filled the senate with joy; the people appeared indifferent; the soldiers were anxious to avenge him. They were, however, without leaders, and they were finally induced by their prefects to acquiesce in the choice of the senate.

The person on whom this choice fell was M. Cocceius Nerva, a senator of a consular family, and who had himself borne the principal offices in the state. He was now in the sixty-fourth year of his age; he was a man of the most amiable temper, yet not devoid of energy and activity, but mild and clement even to a fault. To reverse the acts of his predecessor was the first care of Nerva. The banished were recalled and their properties restored to them; accusations of treason were quashed; some laws were enacted against delators; slaves and freedmen who had accused their masters were put to death. Nerva reduced the taxes, and made so many other beneficent regulations that men expected a golden age under his mild domination.

It was not long, however, before a conspiracy was formed to deprive the empire of this excellent prince (97). The head of it was a nobleman named Calpurnius Crassus, who, by lavish promises, solicited the soldiers to revolt. Nerva imitated the conduct of Titus on a similar occasion. He put the swords of the gladiators into the hands of the conspirators as they sat with him at a public spectacle; and he contented himself with banishing Crassus to Tarentum. The prætorians,

* Authorities: Dion Cassius, the Augustan History and the Epitomators.

who longed to avenge Domitian, soon however found a leader in their commander Ælianus Casperius; and they besieged the emperor in his palace, demanding the lives of those who had slain his predecessor. Nerva, it is said, showed outward marks of fear; but he acted with spirit and refused to give them up, stretching out his neck for the soldiers to strike off his head if they wished. But all availed not; he was forced to abandon them to their fate, and Petronius and Parthenius were slain; the latter with circumstances of great barbarity. Casperius even forced the emperor to thank the soldiers in presence of the people for having put to death the worst of men.

This insolence of the prætorians proved advantageous to the state. Nerva saw the necessity of a more vigorous hand to hold the reins of empire. More solicitous for the welfare of his country than the elevation of his family, he passed over his relations, and fixed on M. Ulpius Trajanus, the commander of the army of Lower Germany, to be his adopted son and successor. On the occasion of a victory being gained over the Alemans in Pannonia, he ascended the Capitol to deposit there the laurel which had been sent him according to usage, and he then in presence of the people declared his adoption of Trajan, to whom he shortly after gave the titles of Cæsar and Germanicus, and then that of emperor with the tribunician power, thus making him his colleague.

The good emperor did not long survive this disinterested act. He died in the beginning of the following year (98), regretted by both senate and people; and his ashes were deposited in the monument of Augustus.

M. Ulpius Trajanus Crinitus.

A.U. 851-870. A.D. 98-117.

M. Ulpius Trajanus was born at a town named Italica, near Seville in Spain. He early devoted himself to a military life, and served as a tribune under his father, as it would appear. He was afterwards prætor and consul; after his consulate he retired to his native country, whence he was summoned by Domitian to take the command in Lower Germany.

Trajan had all the qualities of mind and body that form the perfect soldier. He was rigid in discipline, but affable in manner; hence he possessed both the love and the respect of his men, and the tidings of his adoption to the empire were received with joy by all the armies. He received at Cologne the account of the death of his adoptive father; but instead of proceeding to Rome, he remained till the following year, regulating the affairs of the German frontier, and enforcing discipline in the army. During this time he summoned to his presence Casperius and the mutinous prætorians, and punished them for their insolence to the late emperor.

At length (99) he set out for Rome, where he was received with unbounded joy. He made his entry on foot; and ascended the Capitol, and then proceeded to the palace. His wife Plotina, who was with him, turned round as she was going up the steps, and said aloud to the people, "I enter here such as I wish to go out of it." She kept her word; for her influence was exerted only for good as long as she lived.

Trajan remained for nearly two years at Rome occupied in the arts of peace. His only object seems to have been the promotion of the happiness of those over whom he ruled. The senate enjoyed the highest consideration; the prince, like Vespasian and Titus, lived on terms of the most cordial intimacy with its members; and the best men of the time were ranked as his friends. Justice was administered with impartiality; the vile brood of delators was finally crushed; oppressive taxes were reduced or abolished; the greatest care was taken to secure a regular supply of food to the people.

But the military genius of the emperor could not long brook inactivity, and he seized an early occasion of engaging in war with the Dacians. He observed that the power of this people was on the increase; he disdained to pay the tribute conceded by Domitian; and Decebalus had, it is further said, entered into relations with the Parthians. Trajan therefore crossed the Danube (101) at the head of a large army; the Dacians gave him battle, but were defeated with great slaughter; the Romans also suffered so severely, that the emperor had to tear up his own garments to make bandages for the wounded. Decebalus sent his nobles in vain to solicit peace; the emperor and his generals pushed on their successes; height after height was won; the Dacian capital

named Zermizegethusa was taken, and Decebalus was at length obliged to consent to receive peace on the terms usual in the days of the republic; namely, the surrender of arms, artillery and deserters, the dismantling of fortresses, the abandonment of conquests, and an offensive and defensive alliance with Rome. Trajan, having left garrisons in the capital and some other strong places, returned to Italy, and triumphed, taking the title of Dacicus.

Decebalus, though he submitted for the present, was preparing for future war; he collected arms, received deserters, and repaired his fortresses. He invited his neighbours to aid him, showing that if they suffered him to be destroyed, their own subjection would inevitably follow. He thus induced many to join him; and he made war on some of those who refused. War being therefore again declared against the Dacian prince (104), Trajan put himself at the head of his army, and fixed his head-quarters in Mœsia. Here he occupied himself in raising one of his most magnificent works, a bridge of stone over the Danube. It consisted of twenty-one arches, each one hundred and seventy feet in span, the piers being one hundred and fifty feet in height and sixty in breadth. A castle was built at either end to defend it*; and when it was completed Trajan passed over the river (105). No great action seems to have ensued, but the troops of Decebalus were routed in detail, and his fortresses captured one after another. Seeing all hope gone, the brave but unfortunate prince put an end to himself. Dacia was then reduced to the form of a province, and numerous Roman colonies were established in it. On his return to Rome (106), where he found numerous embassies, even one from India, awaiting him, Trajan celebrated his second triumph, after which he gave games that lasted one hundred and twenty-three days, in which 11,000 animals were slaughtered and 10,000 gladiators fought.

The warlike spirit of Trajan could not remain at rest; and he soon undertook an expedition to the East. The pretext was, that the king of Armenia had received his diadem from the Parthian monarch instead of the Roman emperor; the real cause was Trajan's lust of military glory. The condition of the Parthian empire at this time was favourable to his views;

* The site of this bridge, which was destroyed by Hadrian, is unknown. It is supposed to have been between Visininac and Widin.

it was verging fast to its decline, and was torn by intestine convulsions, the sure forerunners of national dissolution.

The Armenian king at this time was named Exedares, probably a son or grandson of Tiridates. Chosroës the Parthian king however deposed him, and gave the kingdom to Parthamasiris, his own nephew, when he found that Trajan was on his way to the East, and despatched an embassy (which met the emperor at Athens) bearing presents and praying that he would send the diadem to the new prince. Trajan was not however to be diverted from his purpose; he merely replied that friendship was to be shown by deeds rather than by words, and continued his march for Syria. He reached Antioch in the first week in January (107); and having made all the necessary preparations, he led his troops into Armenia. The various princes and chieftains of the country met him with presents; resistance was no where offered, and at a place named Elegeia Parthamasiris himself entered the Roman camp and laid his diadem at the feet of the emperor. Perceiving that he was not desired to resume it, and being terrified by the shouts of the soldiers, who saluted Trajan *Imperator*, he craved a private audience; but finding that Trajan had no intention of acceding to his request, he sprang out of the tent and was quitting the camp in a rage, when Trajan had him recalled, and from the tribunal told him that Armenia belonged to the Romans and should have a Roman governor, but that he was at liberty to go whither he pleased. His Armenian attendants were then detained as Roman subjects, and himself and his Parthians were dismissed under charge of an escort of horse. Parthamasiris fell some time after in an action, and Armenia was reduced to a Roman province. The kings of the nations of the Caucasus, and around the Euxine sea, acknowledged the supremacy of Rome. Trajan then led his army into Mesopotamia, all whose princes submitted to his authority. He took the city of Nisibis, and Chosroës was obliged to conclude a treaty with him, and even, it is said, to implore his aid against his rebellious subjects. On his return to Rome Trajan assumed the title of Parthicus.

The history of the reign of this celebrated emperor has come down to us in so very imperfect a form, that it is utterly impossible to ascertain how long he remained in the East, or when he came back to Italy. All we know is that he did return to Rome and stayed there till the year 114, when we

find him again in Syria, preparing for a war with the Parthians, the cause of which is not assigned. In the spring of this year he entered Mesopotamia. The Parthians prepared to defend the passage of the Tigris, but Trajan had caused boats to be framed in the forests about Nisibis, and conveyed on waggons with the army. A bridge of boats was speedily constructed, and the enemy retired after having vainly attempted to impede the passage of the Romans. The whole of Adiabene submitted; and Trajan, as it would appear, returned to the Euphrates, for we are told that he visited Babylon, and inspected the sources of the bitumen used for constructing its walls. He also, it is added, set about clearing the Nahar-malca (*Kings'-river*), or canal, which formerly connected the Euphrates and Tigris, in order to convey boats along it for the passage of this last river. But he gave up the attempt, and carrying the boats as before on waggons, he set his army over the Tigris, and captured Ctesiphon, the Parthian capital*. He formed the conquered country into the provinces of Assyria and Mesopotamia, and then (116) embarking on the Tigris, sailed down it and entered the Persian gulf. Seeing there, we are told, a vessel under sail for India, he declared that if he was a young man he would certainly penetrate to that remote country, and advance further than even the great Macedonian conqueror, whom he extolled and eulogised.

It is probable that Trajan returned up the Euphrates; for he was apparently at Babylon† when he learned that all the conquered countries had revolted, and driven away or slain the Roman garrisons. He sent his generals Maximus and Lusius Quietus to reduce them. The former was defeated and slain, but the latter recovered Nisibis, and took and burned Edessa; the city of Seleucia met with a similar fate from those sent against it. In order to keep the Parthians at rest, Trajan returned to Ctesiphon, and assembling the inhabitants and his soldiers in the adjoining plain, he ascended a lofty tribunal,

* Ctesiphon lay on the left bank of the Tigris, twenty miles south of the modern Baghdad. The city of Seleucia stood on the opposite side of the river, and was a suburb to it.

† Μαθὼν δὲ ταῦτα ὁ Τραϊανὸς ἐν πλοίῳ (καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖσε ἦλθε κατὰ τὴν φήμην ἧς οὐδὲν ἄξιον εἶδεν, ὃ τι μὴ χῶματα καὶ μύθους καὶ ἐρείπια, καὶ διὰ τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον ᾧ καὶ ἐνήγισεν ἐν τῷ οἰκήματι ἐν ᾧ ἐτελεύτησκει.) Dion, lxviii. 30. For πλοίῳ we read with Tillemont Βαβυλώνι, as the only word which gives sense to the passage. It was certainly there that Alexander died.

and having expatiated on his own exploits, he placed the diadem on the head of Parthamaspatēs, one of the rival candidates for the throne, declaring him king of the Parthians.

A portion of the Arabs of Mesopotamia having submitted to him, Trajan had formed a province of Arabia. But the Arabs loved independence too much to remain long in obedience, and the emperor found it necessary (117) to besiege in person a strong town belonging to them named Atrā, which lay not far from the Tigris. The desert nature of the surrounding country, the extreme heat, the swarms of mosquitoes and other insects, together with tempests of thunder, hail, and rain which occurred, soon obliged him to raise the siege and retire; and shortly after he fell sick, and leaving the command in the East with his relative Hadrian, he set out on his return to Italy. But at Selinus in Cilicia he had a severe attack of dysentery, which carried him off in a few days, in the sixty-third year of his age, after a reign of twenty years all to about six months. His ashes were conveyed to Rome, and placed beneath the column raised in his magnificent Forum to commemorate his Dacian wars, and which still remains in that city.

Imperfect as are the narratives which we possess of the reign of this prince, the testimony so unanimously borne to his virtues places them beyond dispute. Nearly three centuries after his death, the acclamation of the senate to their emperors continued to be, "May you be more fortunate than Augustus, and better than Trajan!"* In the Panegyric of Pliny the emperor is without a fault; but we learn from the less courtly epitomators that Trajan was so devoted to wine and the pleasures of the table, that he found it necessary to give directions that any orders which he issued after his prolonged repasts should not be regarded; and while the panegyrist lauds his chastity, truth accuses him of being immoderately addicted to the vice which degraded the ancient world. In his lust of conquest Trajan evinced little political wisdom. The prudent Augustus advised his successors to be content with the limits of the empire which he had left†, and the Danube and Euphrates formed natural boundaries. This sage advice was first neglected by the stupid Claudius; but the conquest of Britain was not difficult, and an island once won is easily retained, while the acquisitions of Trajan could only be held by a large

* "*Felicioꝛ Augusto, melioꝛ Trajano.*" Eutrop. viii. 5.

† Tac. Ann. i. 11. Dion, lvi. 33.

military force. The best proof of his want of judgement in making them, is the fact that his eastern conquests were abandoned at once by Hadrian, and Dacia in about a century and a half after his death by one of the ablest of his successors.

P. Ælius Hadrianus.

A.U. 870-891. A.D. 117-138.

The successor of Trajan was his kinsman P. Ælius Hadrianus, who was of a family of Italica, but born at Rome. Hadrian being left an orphan at the age of ten years, his guardians were Trajan and a knight named Tatianus. He applied himself diligently to study, and became equally skilled in the Greek and Latin languages. He entered the army as a tribune in the time of Domitian. When Trajan attained the empire, Hadrian through the influence of his secretary Sura, rose in favour with him; the empress Plotina also patronised him, and prevailed on Trajan to give him in marriage his niece Sabina. He gradually discharged the principal civil and military offices of the state, and it was generally understood that the emperor intended to adopt him.

It is not by any means certain that the adoption actually took place. Dion assures us, on what may be regarded as good authority, that the whole affair was managed by Plotina and Tatianus, who prepared the letters of adoption, concealing the death of Trajan some days for the purpose, and forwarded them to Hadrian, who had remained at Antioch. At all events the succession was undisputed. Hadrian, having caused himself to be proclaimed emperor, wrote to the senate, excusing it under the plea of its being unsafe to leave the empire without a head, praying them to confirm him in it, and not to confer any honours on him, unless he should himself request them, and making lavish promises of good government. He made Tatianus and Similis (the latter a man of the noblest and most virtuous character) prefects of the prætorians. He wisely resolved to make the Euphrates, as before, the eastern boundary of the empire, and to abandon the useless conquests of Trajan, and he therefore withdrew all the Roman garrisons from beyond that river. These affairs detained him for some time in the East, and he did not arrive in Rome till the following year (118).

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Hadrian's character was a strange mixture of good and ill qualities, but vanity was its predominant feature. His abilities were much above mediocrity, but not content with the knowledge adapted to his rank and situation, he would fain be a proficient in all arts and sciences. He studied medicine and mathematics; he painted, engraved, sang, and played on musical instruments. He was a poet and a critic, and he showed his caprice or his bad taste by preferring Antimachus (the author of a *Thebais*) to Homer, and Ennius to Virgil. At the same time he claimed the highest proficiency in civil and military qualities, and, as was natural in a person of this character, he was envious and jealous of all those who excelled in what he made pretensions to, and he even put many of them to death.

Hadrian remained for about two years in Italy, during which time, however, he made one expedition to the banks of the Danube against the Sarmatians. On this occasion he broke down the arches of Trajan's bridge, under the pretext that it only served to facilitate the irruptions of the Barbarians. At Rome he distinguished himself by his attention to the administration of justice (the brightest spot in his character), and by the liberality with which he remitted all the debts due to the fisc for the last sixteen years, burning publicly all the accounts and obligations.

While Hadrian was away from Rome (119) various persons of rank and wealth were put to death on sundry pretexts. Of these the most distinguished were the four consuls, Cornelius Palma, Celsus, Domitius Nigrinus, and Lusius Quietus, all favourites of the late emperor. The charge against them was the having conspired to murder Hadrian when sacrificing, or as others said hunting, and to give the empire to Nigrinus, whom he had designed for his successor, but their real guilt appears to have been their wealth and influence. They were all put to death in the different places where they were found, by order of the senate, against the will of Hadrian as he pretended. He returned to Rome on occasion of this affair, when to silence the murmurs of the people he gave them a double congiary, and he swore to the senate that he would never punish any member of their house unless when condemned by themselves.

At this period also there was a change made in the prefecture of the prætorians. The upright Similis, who had accepted the charge against his inclination, asked and obtained

permission to resign*; and Tatianus, whose power was become too great to be endured by the jealous emperor, was induced by him to ask for a successor. Hadrian, who had cast on him the odium of the late executions, had at first thoughts of putting him to death, but he contented himself with making him quit his important post and accept the rank of a senator. The new prefects were Marcus Turbo, a man of most excellent character and an able officer, and Septimius Clarus.

In the year 120, as it would appear, Hadrian commenced visiting the various provinces of the empire, a practice in which he passed nearly the whole of his reign. Restlessness and curiosity seem to have been his principal motives, but his presence proved of essential benefit to the provinces. He saw with his own eyes their real condition; he looked into the conduct of their governors, and punished those who were guilty of fraud or oppression; he adorned their towns with public buildings, and he bestowed money liberally where any calamities had occurred.

Hadrian first visited Gaul: he thence proceeded to the Germanies, where he carefully inspected the troops, made sundry judicious regulations respecting the service, and restored the discipline which had fallen into neglect. He thence (121) passed over to Britain, inspected the troops there, reformed abuses, and, to secure the conquered and civilised portion of the island from the incursions of the barbarous Caledonians, he erected a strong wall eighty miles in length, running from the mouth of the Tyne to the Solway Firth. He then returned to Gaul, and he spent his winter at Tarracona in Spain. Some troubles in Africa drew him over to that country in the following year (122). It is not known where he spent the winter, but we find him the next year in Asia, where a war with the Parthians had been on the point of breaking out. Having averted this danger, he spent a year rambling through Syria and Asia Minor, and then (124) visited the isles of the Ægean, and finally came to Athens, where he passed the winter. He was initiated in the Eleusian mysteries, and he conferred many favours on the people of Athens. From Greece he passed over to Sicily (125), in order to ascend Mount Ætna, and witness from its summit the

* He retired to the country, where he spent the remaining seven years of his life. On his tomb he caused to be inscribed, "Here lies Similis, who existed (βίους) so many years, and lived (ζήσας) seven." Dion, lxi. 19.

rising of the sun. He then returned to Rome, where he appears to have remained till the year 129, when he again visited Africa and conferred many benefits on the provincials. The following year (130) he set out for Asia, and while there he was waited on by most of the princes from about the Euxine and Caucasus. He sent back to Chosroës his daughter, who had been made a captive by Trajan at the taking of Ctesiphon. He visited Syria, Judæa, and Arabia, everywhere making regulations and punishing evil governors, and at length (132) arrived at Alexandria in Egypt, where he remained for more than a year. On his way thither he had visited and repaired the tomb of Pompeius the Great, remarking, in an extemporary Greek verse, how strange it was that he who had so many temples should scarcely have a tomb*.

The death of the celebrated Antinoüs occurred while Hadrian was in Egypt. This was a beautiful youth, a native of Bithynia, beloved after the unnatural but prevalent fashion of the age by the emperor. According to Hadrian's own account he fell into the Nile and was drowned; others said that, like the Alcestis of Grecian fable, he devoted himself, according to the superstition of the time, to prolong the days of the emperor; while others affirm that Hadrian, who was curious about magic arts, sacrificed him in order to pry into futurity by the inspection of his entrails. The extreme grief of the emperor at his loss gives probability to the first account, but is not inconsistent with the second. He built a town, named after him, where he died; he set up statues of him all over the empire; the Greeks at his desire declared him to be a god, and temples were raised and oracles ascribed to him; in fine a new star observed at this time was pronounced to be the soul of Antinoüs.

Hadrian at length (134) quitted Egypt, and returning through Syria and Asia came and passed another winter at Athens. He was now admitted to the Greater Mysteries, and he was in return lavish of benefits to the Athenians, and he adorned their city with many stately edifices. In the spring (135) he returned to Rome, and his health being now in a declining state, and having no offspring, he resolved to adopt a successor. His choice, after long consideration, fixed on L. Ceionius Commodus Verus, a man of noble birth and of literary taste, but sunk in indolence and voluptuousness, and

* Τῷ ναοῖς βρίθοντι πόση σπάνις ἐπλετο τύμβου.

delicate in health. After the adoption of Verus, Hadrian retired from the city and fixed his abode at his villa near Tibur*, where he devoted himself chiefly to the cultivation of the fine arts. His disorder still continuing he became peevish and cruel, and he put to death, or forced to die, several men of rank, among whom was his own brother-in-law Servianus, a man of ninety years of age.

Verus, who had been sent to take the command in Pannonia, returned to Rome in the end of the year 137. He had prepared an address to make to the emperor on New-year's day, but having taken an opiate to settle his nerves, the dose proved too powerful, and he fell asleep never to wake. Hadrian then fixed on a senator named T. Aurelius Antoninus, a man of most excellent character, as his successor, and he adopted him, making Antoninus, who was childless, adopt his wife's nephew, M. Annius Verus, and L. Ælius Verus, the son of the late Commodus Verus.

His disease, which appears to have been dropsy, growing worse and worse every day, Hadrian felt life to be a burden, of which he was anxious to be relieved. He implored but in vain those about him to give him a sword or poison that he might terminate his sufferings, and Antoninus watched over him assiduously. The irritation of his mind, it is said, made him become daily more cruel. He ordered several senators to be put to death, but Antoninus saved them by pretending that the orders had been executed. At length he retired to Baiæ, and neglected all regimen, using the common saying that "many doctors killed a king." He died on the 10th of July, 138†, in the sixty-third year of his age, and after a reign of twenty-one years, wanting a month. The senate, on account of his late cruelties, proposed at first to abrogate all his acts, and refused him the usual honours; but they yielded to the arguments and the tears of Antoninus, and Hadrian was deified, and his ashes consigned to the splendid mausoleum which he had raised on the banks of the Tiber‡.

* The extensive ruins of this villa still exist.

† A little before his death he made the following pretty lines, addressed to his soul: (The measure is dimeter iambic acatalectic.)

Animula vagula, blandula,
Hospes, comesque corporis,
Quæ nunc abibis in loca
Pallidula, rigida, nudula,
Nec, ut soles, dabis joca?

‡ The Moles Hadriani, the present castle of St. Angelo.

The merits of Hadrian as a monarch, however, far outnumbered his defects. He maintained peace and plenty in the interior of the state, and he kept the army in a condition of the greatest efficiency. Justice was carefully administered, and he was the author of many beneficent laws and regulations. Among these may be observed those in favour of the slaves. Hitherto the law had been, that if a master was assassinated in his house, all the slaves in it should be put to death. Hadrian directed that none should even be put to the torture, except those who were within hearing at the time. He also took from masters the power of life and death over their slaves, and ordered that no slave should be put to death without the sentence of a magistrate. He further abolished the private workhouses all through Italy*.

It was during the reign of this prince that Heaven poured out its last vial of vengeance on the obstinate and fanatic nation of the Jews. Toward the end of the reign of Trajan (115) this people had risen in rebellion in Egypt and Cyrene, and committed great massacres and other atrocities, and the following year they rose in a similar manner in the isle of Cyprus and in Mesopotamia. They were, however, reduced by the generals Marcius Turbo and Lusius Quietus, and they remained at rest till the year 134, when on the occasion of Hadrian's placing a Roman colony at Jerusalem, which he named from himself *Ælia Capitolina*, and building a temple to Jupiter on the site of that of Jehovah, their fanatic spirit took fire, and they flew to arms under a leader named Bar-cokebas (*Son of the Star*), who gave himself out for the Messiah. Hadrian sent the ablest of his generals, Julius Severus, who commanded in Britain, to conduct the war, which lasted about two years. The number of the Jews slain in battle is said to have been 580,000, beside an infinite number who perished by famine and disease, and the loss on the part of the Romans was not inconsiderable. The prisoners were sold for slaves, and the Jews were forbidden henceforth, under pain of death, to come even within sight of Jerusalem.

* See above, p. 32. The evil which Augustus tried to remedy still continued.

T. Aurelius Antoninus Pius.

A.U. 891-914. A.D. 138-161.

Titus Aurelius Antoninus was of a family originally of Nismes (*Nemausia*) in Gaul, but he was born near Lanuvium in Latium. He bore the consulate and other offices of state, and he was so generally beloved that the legacies which in the usual Roman manner he received from his friends made him extremely rich. Though he took a share in public affairs, and had long been of Hadrian's council, his delight was in a country life, and his favourite abode was his villa of Lorii, about twelve miles from Rome on the Aurelian road, the place where he had passed his boyhood.

Antoninus was in the fifty-third year of his age when he was adopted by Hadrian. The senate on his accession decreed him all the usual titles and honours, adding to them that which gave him most pleasure, the title of Pius or 'Dutiful,' on account of his anxiety to guard from reproach the memory of his adoptive father.

For a space of twenty-three years the Roman world was ruled by this excellent prince, in whom men recognised all the virtues that imagination had ascribed to the mythic Numa. The aspirations of Plato for the happiness of mankind in the union of the monarch and the philosopher at length received their accomplishment; for Antoninus, though not in speculation, was in practice a philosopher of the best and most rational school. All the virtues that adorn public or private life were united in him. As a ruler he was just, but clement, generous, and affable; as a private man he was kind, social, liberal, and good-tempered. He lived with his friends on a footing of equality; he encouraged philosophy and rhetoric in all parts of the empire, by giving honours and salaries to their professors; he was attentive in the discharge of all the ceremonies and duties belonging to the religion of the state; but he would not suffer those who differed from it to be persecuted. The public events of this tranquil reign were few and unimportant. Bad men however are always to be found, and we need not therefore be surprised to hear that conspiracies were formed even against Antoninus; but the authors of them were punished by the senate or died by their own hands. The only sounds of war were on the distant frontiers, where the Moors

and the German and Sarmatian tribes were checked by the imperial generals. In Britain Antoninus caused a wall to be run from the firth of Clyde to that of Forth, further north than that of Hadrian. Some tumults in Greece and Judæa were suppressed. The princes of the East and those round the Euxine obeyed the mandates of the Roman emperor, or submitted their differences to his decision.

Antoninus had attained the seventy-fourth year of his age, and the twenty-third of his reign, when at his palace of Lorii (161), after supping rather heartily on some Alpine cheese, he was seized with a vomiting in the night, which was succeeded next day by a fever. On the third day he commended the empire and his daughter to his adopted son, M. Aurelius, and caused the golden image of Fortune, which was usually kept in the imperial chamber, to be transferred to that prince's apartments. To the tribune of the guards, when he came for the word, he gave *Equanimity*; and then, turning round as if to sleep, quietly breathed his last. He was buried in the tomb of Hadrian, and divine honours were decreed to him by the senate.

M. Ælius Aurelius Antoninus.

A.U. 914-933. A.D. 161-180.

The first name of the adopted son, son-in-law and successor of Antoninus, had been Catilius Severus, that of his maternal grandfather, but on the death of his father he was adopted by his paternal grandfather, and called after him, Annius Verus; when adopted by Antoninus he took the name of M. Ælius Aurelius Verus, and when he became emperor he dropped the Verus, and took in its place Antoninus.

The character of this prince was grave, serious and virtuous, even from his childhood, and Hadrian, who had a great affection for him, used, instead of Verus, to call him Verissimus. At the age of twelve he assumed the philosopher's habit, and began to practise the austerity of the philosophic life. He had the best instructors of every kind; he became well-skilled in all active and martial exercises, and acquired a knowledge of painting; but the study of the Stoic philosophy, to which he was devoted, chiefly occupied his attention. He was in his eighteenth year when he was adopted by Antoninus. This prince gave him in marriage his daughter

Faustina, and made him in effect his colleague in the empire. Such was the filial duty of Marcus, that, from the day of his adoption to that of the death of Pius, he lay but two nights out of the palace, and those at different times.

On the death of Pius the senate offered the empire to M. Aurelius alone, but mindful of the wishes of Hadrian, he associated with him in his dignity his adoptive brother, L. Commodus, to whom he gave his own name, and betrothed to him his daughter Lucilla. The Roman world had thus for the first time two emperors; but in effect there was only one, for Verus, who was of an open good-natured temper, and a lover of pleasure rather than of study and business, deferred in all things to his wiser brother, and acted only as his lieutenant.

The new emperors had soon to prepare for the defence of their dominions. The barbarians of Caledonia and of northern Germany renewed their assaults on the adjoining provinces, and Vologeses, the Parthian king, entered Armenia and cut to pieces a Roman army, led by the governor of Cappadocia to its defence. The Parthian monarch then poured a large army into Syria, and defeated the governor of that province. This war appeared of such importance, that it was deemed expedient that one of the emperors should conduct it in person. Aurelius, wishing to remove Verus from the seductions of Rome and give him an opportunity of acquiring military fame, committed to him the Parthian war, and that prince accordingly set out for the East (162). But instead of putting himself at the head of his troops, the voluptuous emperor, under the pretext of attending to the commissariat of the army, remained at Antioch, visiting Daphne in the summer and Laodicea in the winter, and thinking only of pleasure. The war was meantime conducted by his generals, who, especially Avidius Cassius, proved themselves to be able men. It lasted four years; success was generally on the side of the Romans, and Cassius crossed the Tigris, took Ctesiphon, and destroyed the royal palace. The war appears to have been concluded by a treaty, by which the Parthian monarch resigned all claim to the country west of the Tigris. The two emperors then celebrated a joint triumph (166), and assumed the title of Parthic.

While Verus was absent in the East the government of Aurelius at Rome had emulated that of Pius, and been in all things directed to the promotion of the happiness of the people. But in the train of Verus came a pestilence, which ex-

ceeded in virulence any that had occurred for many years, spread to all parts of the empire, and carried off an immense number of people. A famine at Rome accompanied it: and to add to the calamities of the empire, a war with the Marcomans broke out, which was to occupy Aurelius all the rest of his reign.

We always find the German race acting in confederations, and this is perhaps one of the principal reasons why the Romans never could make any permanent impression on them. The confederation was usually named from the principal people engaged in it, and of the tribes on the left bank of the Danube, the Marcomans seem now to have been the most powerful. The removal of the legions, on account of the Parthian war, held out to them an opportunity of ravaging the Roman province. It is also said that the pressure of some of the tribes further north, who had abandoned or been driven from their own lands and came seeking new ones, urged them to war. A union was therefore formed of all the German and Sarmatian nations contiguous to the Danube, for the invasion of the Roman provinces; but while the Parthian war lasted the Romans averted it by negotiation. When however the barbarians saw the empire desolated by the plague, they would no longer be restrained, and they passed the river in all parts, and poured over and ravaged the provinces, taking cities and towns, and dragging thousands into captivity*. The intelligence caused great consternation at Rome, and Aurelius assured the senate that the danger was of such magnitude as to require the presence of both the emperors; not that he set any value on the military talents of Verus, but he did not consider it safe to leave him behind at Rome. The emperors therefore assumed the military habit, and advanced to Aquileia (167). They found that the tidings of their approach had caused the barbarians to repass the Danube, and deputies soon appeared suing for peace. Verus, who longed to return to the delights of Rome, was for accepting their excuses, but Marcus, who judged that they only feigned a desire of peace through fear of his large army, resolved to advance further, and let them see his power. He therefore passed the Alps and advanced into the northern provinces, and having made all the requisite dispositions for the security of Illyricum and Italy, he set out on his return to Rome,

* According to Pausanias (x.) they advanced as far as Elatea in Greece.

permitting Verus to precede his arrival. The war, however, was speedily renewed, and toward the close of the year 169 the emperors proceeded again to Aquileia, in order to take the field in the spring. But the plague was so violent in that town that they could not venture to remain there, and though it was mid-winter they left it in order to return to Rome. On their way, as they were riding in the same carriage, near to Altino, Verus was struck with a fit of apoplexy, and after remaining speechless for three days, he expired. His body was conveyed to Rome, and deposited in the tomb of Hadrian, and he was deified in the usual manner.

There were not wanting those who were malignant enough to charge Marcus with the guilt of having caused the death of Verus by poison or by excessive blood-letting; but his character alone suffices for the refutation of such calumnies. The death of Verus was, however, a great relief to him, for excepting cruelty, this prince had all the vices of Caius and Nero, being devoted to gaming, chariot-racing, gladiators, buffoons, and every species of luxury and dissipation; and Marcus, though aware of and bitterly lamenting his defects, thought it his duty to conceal or excuse the failings of a brother.

Marcus now, unimpeded by his colleague, devoted his whole energies to the improvement and defence of the empire. As the Marcomans had defeated and slain the prætorian prefect Vindex, and were growing every day more formidable, and the legions had been dreadfully thinned by the plague, he took all kinds of men into pay. He enrolled slaves, as had been done in the Punic war*, gladiators, the bandits of Dalmatia, and Dardania, and the Diocmitæ, or those employed in pursuit of them. He also commenced the pernicious practice of taking bodies of the Germans into Roman pay. In order to raise funds for the war without distressing the provincials, he caused an auction to be held, for the space of two months, in Trajan's Forum, at which all the splendid furniture, plate and jewels belonging to the palace, even his own and his wife's silken and golden garments, were sold. Having thus obtained an abundant supply of money, he set out for the seat of war (170).

The war lasted several years, during which the emperor

* The *Folones* (Hist. of Rome, 225); they were now called *Voluntarii*, and the gladiators *Obsequentes*.

did not return to Italy. His residence was for three years at Carnuntum, in Pannonia, on the Danube. He cleared that province of the barbarians, and he gave the Marcomans a notable defeat, as they were effecting the passage of the river. In the year 174 he carried the war beyond the Danube into the country of the Quadans. It was the middle of summer, the heat was excessive, and the enemy contrived to inclose the Roman army in a situation totally destitute of water, and securing all the outlets, they awaited the sure effects of heat and thirst. The sufferings of the Romans were for some time extreme, but at length the clouds were seen to collect, and soon the rain began to descend in torrents. The Quadans, seeing their hopes thus frustrated, fell on the Romans while engaged in quenching their thirst, and would, it is said, have defeated them, had not a tempest of hail and lightning come on, aided by which the Romans gained a victory.

This event, which was no doubt a natural one, was held to be miraculous, and both pagans and Christians claimed the honour of it. The former ascribed it to an Egyptian magician named Arnesiphis, who was with Aurelius, and by his arts caused the ærial Hermes and other demons to send the rain. The latter affirmed that it was sent in answer to the prayers of one of the legions, named the Melitenensian or the Thundering, and which was composed of Christians; and they add that the emperor, in his letter to the senate, acknowledged this to be the fact, and caused the persecution of the Christians to cease*.

The confederates had suffered so much by the war that they now were anxious for peace, and most of them sent deputies to the emperor. The Quadans, the Marcomans, and the Sarmatian Jazygans, obtained peace on the terms of giving up all the deserters and prisoners, and of the two former not dwelling within less than five miles of the Danube; the Jazygans of double that distance. Other smaller nations were taken into alliance with the Romans, and lands were given them in the adjacent provinces, and even in Italy.

This accommodation with the barbarians was hastened by

* Euseb. Hist. Ec. v. 5; Tert. Ap. 5; Xiphil. lxxi. 9. Apollinaris (*ap. Euseb.*) says that the legion received the title of Thundering (*Fulminea*) on this occasion; but Tillemont observes that an inscription proves it to have belonged to the 12th legion in the time of Trajan; and Valerius Flaccus (vi. 55.) plainly alludes to it in the time of the Flavian emperors.

the intelligence of a revolt in Syria. Avidius Cassius, who had in effect conducted the Parthian war, and had afterwards commanded on the Danube, had received from Marcus the government of that province, in order that he might restore the discipline of the army. Cassius, who was a man of the greatest rigour, and was even barbarous in his punishments, had still the art of attaching the soldiery, and the Syrian army was soon in a most effective state of discipline and devoted to its leader; the subjects and the neighbouring princes were also inclined to Cassius, and feeling, or affecting to feel, a contempt for the mild philosophy and the extreme lenity and clemency of Marcus, he at length (175) resolved to declare himself emperor. The whole of Asia south of Mount Taurus, and Egypt, submitted, and the troops of Bithynia were on the point of declaring for him. The emperor was informed of the revolt by Marcius Verus, the governor of Cappadocia. He concealed the matter at first, but finding that it had come to the ears of the soldiers, he called them together, and addressed them in a speech worthy of himself. He then wrote to the same effect to the senate, and that body declared Cassius a public enemy. Marcus was preparing to march into the East to contend for his empire, when the head of his rival was brought to him; for Cassius, as he was one day walking or riding, was fallen on and slain by two of his own officers, after a dream of empire of three months. The army returned to its obedience, and put to death the eldest son of Cassius and his prætorian prefect, and no more blood was shed. Cassius' papers were burnt, either by the emperor or by Verus; his family was treated with favour; the cities and towns which had declared for him were forgiven.

In order to regulate the affairs of the East, Marcus proceeded thither in person. He visited Syria and Egypt, and stopping on his return at Athens (176), he was there initiated in the mysteries. On the 23rd of December he entered Rome in triumph, with his son Commodus. The triumph was for the victories over the Germans.

While Marcus was in Asia, the empress Faustina, who accompanied him, died suddenly in a little town at the foot of Mount Taurus. Her husband lamented her even with tears, and at his request the senate deified her, and erected an altar to her, at which all young maidens, when they married, were to sacrifice with their bridegrooms. Yet, if history may be

credited, Faustina was so abandoned to lust that she used to select the most vigorous rowers from the fleet and gladiators from the arena, to share her embraces, and the general opinion was that a gladiator, and not Marcus, was the father of Commodus. Her infamy, it is said, was not unknown to her husband, who, when urged to divorce her if he would not put her to death, replied, "If I put away my wife I must restore her dower," that is the empire; a reply so unworthy of Marcus, that we cannot regard it as true*.

The war had been rekindled on the banks of the Danube; the Marcomans, Quadians and their allies were again in arms, and the presence of the emperor was required. He left Rome in the autumn of 178, taking with him his son. He is said to have gained a considerable victory the following year, and the subjugation of the barbarians was regarded as certain; but in the spring of 180 he was attacked by a contagious malady, which carried him off on the seventh day, after a reign of nineteen years, and when he had nearly attained the fiftyninth year of his age.

The emperor M. Aurelius has been compared to the English king Alfred. Like him he united the active and contemplative life, led armies and cultivated literature. But Alfred had far greater difficulties to contend with, and his studies were more directed to objects suitable to a sovereign. The British monarch too (favoured in this perhaps by nature or fortune) was more happy in his family than the Roman; for while Alfred left children worthy to occupy his place and was blest in all his domestic relations, the vices of his wife, his son, and his adoptive brother, cast a shade over the virtues of Aurelius. His blindness to these vices, if he really was not aware of them, derogates from his judgement and wisdom; while if we concede him penetration of character, we must condemn the weakness which could, for example, commit the happiness of the world to a Commodus. A certain imbecility of character was in effect the chief blemish of Aurelius. It would almost seem as if too early a study of speculative philosophy were detrimental to a man who is called on to take an active part in the affairs of life, and to direct the destinies of an empire.

* It is more probable that he did not know her infamy; for in the first book of his *Meditations*, written only a short time before she died, he praises her obedience, affection, and simplicity of manners.

"If a man," says Gibbon, "were called to fix a period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would without hesitation name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus. The vast extent of the Roman empire was governed by absolute power under the guidance of virtue and wisdom. The armies were restrained by the firm but gentle hand of four successive emperors, whose characters and authority commanded involuntary respect. The forms of the civil administration were carefully preserved by Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the Antonines, who delighted in the image of liberty, and were pleased with considering themselves as the accountable ministers of the laws. Such princes deserved the honour of restoring the republic, had the Romans of their days been capable of enjoying a rational freedom."

In this passage, characterised by the author's usual prejudices, there is certainly much that is true, but mingled with exaggeration and error. The character and reign of Hadrian, for example, are surely not entitled to such lofty terms of praise. The brightest spot in the picture is the period of the dominion of Pius; but our information respecting that reign is so imperfect, that we have not the means of forming a correct judgement. As happiness is seated so entirely in the mind, and depends so much on natural character, comparisons of the amount of it enjoyed in different periods and by different classes of persons are quite fallacious; and we have no doubt but that the guards and the populace at Rome, for example, thought themselves far happier under a Nero and a Domitian than a Hadrian and an Aurelius. We still, however, agree generally in the conclusions of the historian.

CHAPTER IV.*

COMMODUS. PERTINAX. JULIAN. SEVERUS.

A.U. 933-964. A.D. 180-211.

Commodus.—Conspiracy against him.—Perennis.—Cleander.—Maternus and the Deserters.—Death of Cleander.—Vices of Commodus.—His death.—Elevation and murder of Pertinax.—Empire put to auction.—Pescennius Niger.—Septimius Severus.—Clodius Albinus.—March of Severus.—Julian.—His Death.—Prætorians disbanded.—Severus at Rome.—War with Niger,—with Albinus.—Parthian war.—Family of Severus.—Plautianus.—Severus in Britain.—His death.—Maxims of government.

L. Ælius Aurelius Commodus.

A.U. 933-945. A.D. 180-192.

L. ÆLIUS AURELIUS COMMODUS, the son and successor of M. Aurelius, was in the nineteenth year of his age when the death of his excellent father left him master of the Roman world. He was the first of the Roman emperors who was what was termed *Porphyrogenitus*, i. e. born to a reigning emperor. Not a murmur was raised against his succession; a liberal donative gratified the soldiers, and the war was during the summer prosecuted with vigour against the barbarians: but Commodus longed for the pleasures of Rome, and he willingly listened to their solicitations for peace. Treaties honourable to Rome were therefore concluded. The terms given to the Quadans and Marcomans were nearly the same as those accorded by Marcus, but they were bound not to make war on the Jazygans, the Burrans, or the Vandals. They were each to furnish a certain number of men for the Roman armies. The terms imposed on the rest were not dissimilar. The emperor then returned to Rome and triumphed (Oct. 22.).

Commodus is one among the many instances which we may find of the feebleness of education in the attempt to control the tendencies of nature†. It was in vain that Marcus had in

* Authorities: Dion, Herodian, the Augustan History, and the Epitomators.

† "The power of instruction," observes Gibbon, "is seldom of much efficacy, except in those happy dispositions where it is almost superfluous."

his own person given his son an example of all the virtues, and had surrounded him with the ablest instructors. Their lessons were unheeded, and their pupil was distinguished only by skill in the exercises of the gladiators' school, and for the unerring aim with which he flung the javelin or shot the arrow under the teaching of Moors and Parthians. He is also noted for being the first of the emperors who was totally devoid of taste for literature.

The foreign transactions of this reign are of little importance; the German and British frontiers merely gave their usual occupation to the legions. At Rome, for the space of about three years, all was tranquillity also; for Commodus, whose natural character, as we are assured, was weak and timid rather than wicked, allowed himself to be directed by the able and upright men to whom his father had recommended him. His hours were devoted to luxury and indulgence, till at length (183) an event occurred which revealed the latent cruelty of his nature.

After the death of L. Verus, Marcus had given his daughter Lucilla in marriage to Pompeianus, a most respectable senator, and after the death of her mother he allowed her all the honours of an empress, which her brother also continued to her. But on the marriage of Commodus with a lady named Crispina, Lucilla was obliged to yield precedence to the reigning empress. Her haughty spirit deemed this an indignity, and she resolved on revenge. Fearing to entrust her design to her noble-minded husband, she first communicated it to Quadratus, a wealthy young nobleman, with whom she carried on an adulterous intercourse; she also engaged in the plot Claudius Pompeianus, another of her paramours, who was betrothed to her daughter; some senators also were aware of it. As Commodus was entering the amphitheatre through a dusky passage, Pompeianus, who was lying in wait, drew his sword and cried, "The senate sends thee this." But the words prevented the execution of his design, and he was seized by the guards. He, Quadratus, and some others were executed; Lucilla was for the present confined in the isle of Capræ, but she was ere long put to death, and a similar fate soon befell her rival Crispina on account of adultery. In her place Commodus took a freedwoman named Marcia, who had been the concubine of Quadratus, and to whom he gave all the honours of an empress, except that of having fire borne before her*.

* A usage probably of Oriental origin: see Quint. Curt. iii. 3, 9.

The unwise exclamation of Pompeianus sank deep in the mind of Commodus; he learned to regard the senate as his deadly enemies, and many of its most illustrious members were put to death on various pretexts. His only reliance was now on the guards, and the prætorian prefects soon became as important as in former times. The present prefects were Tarruntius Paternus and Perennis, but the arts of the latter caused the former to be removed and put to death, and the whole power of the state thus fell into his own hands, for the timid Commodus no longer ventured to appear in public, and all business was transacted by Perennis. The prefect removed all he dreaded by false accusations, and he amassed wealth by the confiscation of the properties of the nobility. His son was in command of the Illyrian legions, and he now aspired to the empire. But he had offended the army of Britain, and they deputed (186) fifteen hundred of their number to accuse him to Commodus of designs on the empire. They were supported by the secret influence of the freedman Cleander, and Perennis was given up to their vengeance. Himself, his wife, his sister, and two of his children were massacred; his eldest son was recalled and murdered on the way to Rome.

The character of Perennis is doubtful, but that of Cleander who succeeded to his power was one of pure evil. Cleander, a Phrygian by birth, had been brought to Rome as a slave and sold in the public market. He was purchased for the palace, and placed about the person of Commodus, with whom he speedily ingratiated himself; and when the prince became emperor he made Cleander his chamberlain. The power of the freedman, when Perennis was removed, became absolute; avarice, the passion of a vulgar mind, was his guiding principle. All the honours and all the posts of the empire were put to sale; pardons for any crime were to be had for money; and in the short space of three years the wealth of Cleander exceeded that of the Pallas and Narcissus of the early days of the empire.

A conspiracy of an extraordinary nature occurred not long after the death of Perennis. A great number of men who had deserted from the armies put themselves under the command of a common soldier named Maternus; they were joined by slaves whom they freed from their bonds, and they ravaged for some time with impunity the provinces of Gaul and Spain. At length (187) when Maternus found the governors preparing to act with vigour against him, he resolved to make a

desperate effort and be emperor or perish. He directed his followers to disperse and repair secretly to Rome, where he proposed that they should assume the dress of the guards, and fall on the emperor during the license of the festival of the Megalesia*. All succeeded to his wishes; they rendezvoused in Rome, but some of them out of envy betrayed the secret, and Maternus and some others were taken and executed.

The power of Cleander was now at its height; by gifts to Commodus and his mistresses he maintained his influence at court, and by the erection of baths and other public edifices he sought to ingratiate himself with the people. He had also the command of the guards, for whom he had for some time caused prætorian prefects to be made and unmade at his will. He at length divided the office between himself and two others, but he did not assume the title†. As an instance of the way in which he disposed of offices, we find in one year (189) no less than five-and-twenty consuls.

What the ultimate views of Cleander may have been is unknown, for he shared the usual fate of aspiring freedmen. Rome was visited at this time by a direful pestilence, and the emperor on account of it resided out of the city. The pestilence was as usual attended by famine, and this visitation of heaven was by the people laid to the charge of the odious favourite. As they were one day (189) viewing the horse-races in the circus, a party of children entered, headed by a fierce looking girl, and began to exclaim against Cleander. The people joined in the cries, and then rising rushed to where Commodus was residing in the suburbs, demanding the death of Cleander. But the favourite instantly ordered the prætorian cavalry to charge them, and they were driven back to the city with the loss of many lives. When however the cavalry entered the streets they were assailed by missiles from the roofs of the houses, and the people being joined by the urban cohorts rallied and drove them back to the palace, where Commodus still lay in total ignorance of all that had occurred, for fear of Cleander had kept all silent. But now Marcia, or as others said the emperor's sister Fadilla‡, seeing the danger so imminent, rushed into his presence and informed him of the

* For a description of this festival see Ovid, *Fasti*, iv. 179 *seq.*

† He styled himself a *pugione*, ministers being thus named from their offices, *ex. gr. a rationibus, ab epistolis.*

‡ Dion says Marcia, Herodian Fadilla. Tillemont and Gibbon unite the two.

truth. Without a moment's hesitation he ordered Cleander and his son to be put to death. The people placed the head of Cleander on a pole and dragged his body through the streets, and when they had massacred some of his creatures the tumult ceased.

The cruelty of Commodus displayed itself more and more every day, and several men of rank became its victims. At the same time his lust was unbounded ; three hundred beautiful women and as many boys of all ages and countries filled his seraglio, and he abstained from no kind of infamy. He delighted also to exhibit proofs of his skill as a marksman, and he assumed the title and attributes of the hero Hercules. For some time, like Nero, he confined his displays to the interior of his residences, but at length the senate and people were permitted to witness his skill in the amphitheatre. A gallery ran round it for the safety and convenience of the emperor, from which he discharged his darts and arrows with unerring aim at the larger and fiercer animals, while he ventured into the arena to destroy the deer and other timid creatures. A hundred lions were at once let loose, and each fell by a single wound ; an irritated panther had just seized a man, a dart was flung by the emperor and the beast fell dead, while the man remained uninjured. With crescent-headed arrows he cut off the heads of ostriches as they ran at full speed.

But the greatest delight of Commodus was to combat as a gladiator. He appeared in the character of a *Secutor*: he caused to be recorded 735 victories which he had gained, and he received each time an immense stipend out of the gladiatorial fund. Instead of Hercules he now styled himself Paulus, after a celebrated *Secutor*, and caused this appellation to be inscribed on his statues. He also took up his abode in the residence of the gladiators.

At length the tyrant met with the fate he merited. It was his design to put to death the two consuls-elect for the year 193, and on New-year's day to proceed from the gladiators' school in his gladiatorial habit and enter on the consulate. On the preceding day he communicated his design to Marcia, who tried in vain to dissuade him from it. Q. Ælius Lætus, the prætorian prefect, and the chamberlain, Eclectus, also reasoned with him, but to as little purpose. He testified much wrath, and uttered some menaces. Knowing that the threats of the tyrant were the sure precursors of death, they saw that their only hopes of safety lay in anticipation ; they took their resolution

on the moment* ; and when Commodus came from the bath, Marcia, as was her usual practice, handed him a bowl, (in which she had now infused a strong poison,) to quench his thirst.

He drank the liquor off, and then laid himself down to sleep. The attendants were all sent away ; the conspirators were expecting the effect of the poison, when to their surprise he began to vomit profusely. Fearing now that the poison would not take effect, they brought in a vigorous wrestler named Narcissus ; and induced by the promise of a large reward, he laid hold on and strangled the emperor.

P. Helvius Pertinax.

A.U. 946. A.D. 193.

The conspirators had, it is probable, already fixed on the person who should succeed to the empire, and their choice was one calculated to do them credit. It was P. Helvius Pertinax, the prefect of the city, a man now advanced in years, who had with an unblemished character, though born in a humble rank, passed through all the civil and military gradations of the state. Pertinax was the son of a freedman who was engaged in the manufacture of charcoal at Alba Pompeia in the Apennines. He commenced life as a man of letters, but finding the literary profession unprofitable, he entered the army as a centurion, and his career of advancement was rapid.

It was yet night when Lætus and Eclectus proceeded with some soldiers to the house of Pertinax. When informed of their arrival he ordered them to be brought to his chamber, and then, without rising, told them that he had long expected every night to be his last, and bade them execute their office ; for he was certain that Commodus had sent them to put him to death. But they informed him that the tyrant himself was no more, and that they were come to offer him the empire. He hesitated to give credit to them, but having sent one on whom he could depend, and ascertained that Commodus was dead, he consented to accept the proffered dignity. Though it was not yet day they all repaired to the prætorian camp,

* Herodian tells us of a list of those destined to be put to death taken by a child, and read by Marcia, as in the case of Domitian. But he is a very inaccurate writer, and Dion, who was a senator and in Rome at the time, could hardly have been ignorant of the circumstance if it were true.

and Lætus having assembled the soldiers, told them that Commodus was suddenly dead of apoplexy, and that he had brought them his successor, a man whose merits were known to them all. Pertinax then addressed them, promising a large donative. By this time the people (for Lætus had caused the news of Commodus' death to be spread through the city,) had gathered round the camp, and urged by their shouts and importunity, the soldiers swore fidelity to the emperor, though they feared that he was a man who would renew the strictness of discipline.

Before dawn the senate was summoned to the temple of Concord, whither Pertinax had proceeded from the camp. He told them what had occurred, and, noticing his age and his humble extraction, pointed out divers senators as more worthy of the empire than himself. But they would not listen to his excuses, and they decreed him all the imperial titles. Then giving a loose to their rage against the fallen tyrant, they termed him parricide, gladiator, the enemy of the gods and of his country, and decreed that his statues should be cast down, his titles be erased, and his body dragged with the hook through the streets. But Pertinax respected too much the memory of Marcus Aurelius to suffer the remains of his son to be thus treated, and they were by his order placed in the tomb of Hadrian.

Pertinax was cheerfully acknowledged by all the armies. Like Vespasian, he was simple and modest in his dress and mode of life, and he lived on terms of intimacy with the respectable members of the senate. He resigned his private property to his wife and son, but would not suffer the senate to bestow on them any titles. He regulated the finances with the greatest care, remitting oppressive taxes and cancelling unjust claims. He sold by auction all the late tyrant's instruments of luxury, and obliged his favourites to disgorge a portion of their plunder. He granted the waste lands in Italy and elsewhere for a term of years rent-free to those who would undertake to improve them.

The reforming hand of the emperor was extended to all departments of the state; and men looked for a return of the age of the Antonines. But the soldiers dreaded the restoration of the ancient discipline; and Lætus, who found that he did not enjoy the power he had expected, secretly fomented their discontent. So early as the 3rd of January they had seized a senator named Triarius Maternus, intending to make

him emperor, but he escaped from them and fled to Pertinax for protection. Some time after, while the emperor was on the sea-coast attending to the supply of corn, they prepared to raise Socius Falco, then consul, to the empire; but Pertinax came suddenly to Rome, and having complained of Falco to the senate, they were about to proclaim him a public enemy, when the emperor cried that no senator should suffer death while he reigned; and Falco was thus suffered to escape punishment.

Some expressions which Pertinax used on this occasion irritated the soldiers; and Lætus, to exasperate them still more, put several of them to death, as if by his orders. Accordingly on the 28th of March a general mutiny broke out in the camp, and two or three hundred of the most desperate proceeded with drawn swords to the palace. No one opposed their entrance. Pertinax when informed of their approach advanced to meet them. He addressed them, reminding them of his own innocence and of the obligation of their oath. They were silent for a few moments; at length a Tungrian soldier struck him with his sword, crying, "The soldiers send thee this." They all then fell on him, and cutting off his head, set it on a lance and carried it to the camp. Eclectus, faithful to the last, perished with the emperor; Lætus had fled in disguise at the approach of the mutineers. The reign of the virtuous Pertinax had lasted only eighty-six days; he was in the sixty-seventh year of his age.

M. Didius Severus Julianus.

A.U. 946. A.D. 193.

The mutineers on their return to the camp found there Sulpicianus, the prefect of the city, the late emperor's father-in-law, who had been sent thither to try to appease the mutiny. The bloody proof which they bore of the empire's being vacant, excited while it should have extinguished his ambition, and he forthwith began to treat for the dangerous prize. Immediately some of the soldiers ran, and ascending the ramparts, cried out aloud, that the empire was for sale, and would be given to the highest bidder. The news reached the ears of Didius Julianus, a wealthy and luxurious senator, as he sat at table; and urged by his wife and daughter and his parasites, he rose and hastened to the camp. The military auctioneers

stood on the wall, one bidder within the other without. Sulpicianus had gone as high as 5000 denars a man, when his rival at one bidding rose to 6250. This spirited offer carried it; the soldiers also had a secret dread that Sulpicianus, if emperor, might avenge the death of his son-in-law. The gates therefore were thrown open, and Julian was admitted and saluted emperor; but the soldiers had the generosity to stipulate for the safety of his rival.

From the camp Julian, escorted by the soldiers, proceeded to the senate-house. He was there received with affected joy, and the usual titles and honours were decreed him; but the people stood aloof and in silence, and those who were more distant uttered loud curses on him. When Julian came to the palace, the first object that met his eyes was the corpse of his predecessor; he ordered it to be buried, and then, it is said, sat down and passed the greater part of the night at a luxurious banquet, and playing at dice. In the morning the senate repaired to him with their feigned compliments; but the people still were gloomy, and when he went down to the senate-house and was about to offer incense to the Janus before the doors*, they cried out that he was a parricide and had stolen the empire. He promised them money, but they would have none of it; and at length he ordered the soldiers to fall on them, and several were killed and wounded. Still they ceased not to revile him and the soldiers, and to call on the other armies, especially that of Pescennius Niger, to come to their aid.

The principal armies were that of Syria commanded by Niger; that of Pannonia under Septimius Severus, and that of Britain under Clodius Albinus, each composed of three legions, with its suitable number of auxiliaries.

C. Pescennius Niger was a native of Aquinum, of a simple equestrian family. He entered the army as a centurion, and rose almost solely by merit till he attained the lucrative government of Syria. As an officer Niger was a rigorous maintainer of discipline; as a governor he was just, but mild and indulgent; and he succeeded in gaining alike the affections of the soldiers and the subjects. In his private life he was chaste† and temperate.

* See our Ovid's *Fasti*, Excurs. I. The senate-house was now by the temple of Janus.

† "*Rei veneræ, nisi ad procreandos liberos, prorsus ignarus. Denique etiam sacra quædam in Gallia, quæ castissimis decernuntur, consensu publico, celebranda suscepit.*"—Spartianus.

L. Septimius Severus was born at Leptis in Africa. He received a learned education, and devoted himself to the bar, and M. Aurelius made him advocate of the fisc. He acted as civil governor of several provinces, and had occasionally a military command, but had seen little or no actual service. After his consulate, Commodus, through the influence of Lætus, gave him the command of the Pannonian legions*.

D. Clodius Albinus was also an African. He was born at Adrumetum, of an honourable family, which derived its origin from the Postumii and Ceionii of Rome. He entered the army early, and rose through all the gradations of the service, being highly esteemed by M. Aurelius. He commanded in Bithynia, at the time of the revolt of Cassius, and kept his legions in their duty. Commodus gave him the command in Gaul and in Britain, and designed him for his successor. Albinus was a strict and even severe officer. He was fond of agriculture, on which subject he wrote some books. He was charged with private vices, but probably without reason.

When the intelligence of the murder of Pertinax and the sale of the empire to Julian, reached the armies of Syria and Pannonia, their generals saw the prospect of empire open to them as the avengers of the emperor whom they had acknowledged. Each of them assembled his troops and expatiated on the atrocity of the deed which had been perpetrated at Rome, and each was saluted Augustus by his army and the subjects. But while Niger, seeing all the provinces and allied princes of Asia unanimous in his favour, and therefore indulging in confidence, remained inactive at Antioch, Severus resolved to push on for the capital, and possess himself of that seat of empire. Having secured the adherence of the army of Gaul, he wrote a most friendly letter to Albinus, giving him the title of Cæsar, and adopting him as his son; by which he made sure of his neutrality, if not of his co-operation. He then advanced by rapid marches for Rome. Day and night he appeared in full armour, and surrounded by a guard of six hundred chosen men, who never laid aside their corselets. Resistance was no where offered; all hailed him as the avenger of Pertinax.

* See his life in the Augustan History. "The youth of Severus," says Gibbon, "had been trained in the implicit obedience of camps, and his riper years spent in the despotism of military command." We have noticed some similar inaccurate assertions in this writer, who is in general so correct.

The wretched Julian was filled with dismay when he heard of the approach of the formidable Pannonian army. He made the senate declare Severus a public enemy; he distributed large sums of money to the prætorians to induce them to prepare to defend him; but these dissolute troops were vigorous only for evil, and they could not resume the discipline they had lost; the marines summoned from Misenum were still more inefficient; and an attempt at training elephants for war in the Oriental manner only excited derision. Julian also caused an entrenchment to be run in front of the city, and he secured the palace with strong doors and bars, as if it could be maintained when all else was lost. He put to death Marcia, Lætus, and all concerned in the murder of Commodus, probably with a view to the favour of the soldiery.

Severus meantime had reached Ravenna and secured the fleet. Julian having made some fruitless attempts on his life, caused the senate to declare him his associate in the empire. But Severus now disdained such divided power; he had written to the prætorians, assuring safety to all but the actual assassins of Pertinax, and they had accepted the conditions. The consul, Silius Messala, assembled the senate, and it was resolved to put Julian to death, and give the empire to Severus. When those charged with the mandate for his death came to Julian, his only words were, "What evil have I done? Whom have I slain?" He was then killed by a common soldier, after a reign of only sixty-six days.

L. Septimius Severus.

A.U. 946-964. A.D. 193-211.

Severus was met at Interamna (*Terni*), in Umbria, seventy miles from Rome, by deputies from the senate. He received them with favour, and still continued to advance. As he drew nigh to Rome he commanded the execution of the murderers of Pertinax, and he sent orders to the remaining prætorians to leave their arms in their camp and come to meet him, dressed as they were wont when attending the emperors on solemn occasions. They obeyed, and Severus received them in the plain before his camp, and addressed them

from a tribunal, reproaching them with the murder of Pertinax, and the sale of the empire to Julian. He would spare their lives, he said, but he would leave them nothing save their tunics, and death should be the fate of any of them who ever came within a hundred miles of the capital. While he was speaking his soldiers had imperceptibly surrounded them; resistance was vain, and they quietly yielded up their swords and their rich habiliments, and mournfully retired. A detachment had meantime taken possession of their camp, to obviate the effects of their despair.

Severus entered the city at the head of his army. The senate and people met him with all the marks of joy and festivity. He ascended the Capitol and worshiped; he then visited the other temples, and at length proceeded to the palace. In the morning he met the senate, to whom he made a speech, full of the fairest promises, assuring them that Marcus should be his model, and swearing that he would put no senator to death unless condemned by themselves,—an oath which he kept but indifferently. The usual titles and powers had been already decreed him; among these was the title of Pertinax, of which prince he affected to be the avenger, and the ceremony of whose deification he performed with the greatest magnificence and solemnity. He distributed large sums of money among the soldiers and people; he regulated the supply of provisions, and he examined into the conduct of several governors of provinces, and punished those who were proved guilty of oppression or extortion.

Severus restored the prætorian guards on a new model, and raised them to four times their original number. Augustus had admitted none but Italians into this body; the youth of Spain, Noricum and Macedonia had gradually been suffered to enlist in it; but Severus threw it open to all, selecting the ablest and most faithful soldiers from the legions, for the higher pay and more easy life of the guardsmen.

After a stay of only thirty days in Rome Severus set out for the war against Niger, who was master of all Asia, and held the strong city of Byzantium in Europe. The preparations on both sides occupied some time; at length Severus took the field, and leaving part of his troops to carry on the siege of Byzantium, he sent the main body of his army, under his generals, over the Hellespont. Æmilianus, the proconsul of Asia, gave them battle (194) near Cyzicus, but was defeated. He fled to Cyzicus, and thence to another unnamed

town, where he was seized and put to death. Niger in person afterwards engaged the Severian general, Candidus, between Nicæa and Kios. The contest was long and arduous, but victory declared for the European army, and Niger, leaving troops to guard the passes of Mount Taurus, hastened to Antioch to raise men and money. The elements, however, favoured Severus; heavy falls of rain and snow destroyed the defences constructed by Niger, and his troops were obliged to abandon the passes and leave Cilicia open to the enemy.

Niger made his final stand at the Cilician gates, as the pass from Cilicia into Syria at the head of the bay of Issus was named, a place famous for the defeat of Darius by Alexander the Great. The troops of Niger were more numerous, but they were mostly raw levies, yet they fought with constancy; but the elements, we are told, again favoured the Severians, a storm of rain and thunder came over the sea, and blew full in the faces of the Nigrians, and they fled with the loss of 20,000 men. Niger hastened to Antioch, and thence, on the approach of the enemy, he fled to the Euphrates, in order to seek refuge with the Parthians, but he had hardly quitted the town when he was seized, and his head was cut off and sent to Severus.

This emperor, who had been in none of the preceding actions, now appeared. He put to death all the senators who had borne arms for Niger; he banished some, and seized the property of others. He put numbers of inferior rank also to death, and he treated severely Antioch and some other towns. He then (195) led his army over the Euphrates, and his generals employed this and a part of the following year in reducing the various tribes and princes of Mesopotamia. While he was thus engaged (196), he received the joyful intelligence of the surrender of Byzantium, which strong by situation and fortifications, had held out for nearly three years against the valour and skill of the besieging army, and was only subdued at last by famine. The magistrates and soldiers were all put to death; the property of the inhabitants was sold; the walls and the public edifices were demolished; Byzantium was deprived of its title of city, and subjected as a village to the jurisdiction of Perinthus.

It is said that Severus was meditating an invasion of Parthia, but his thoughts were in reality more fixed on securing the succession to his children, by removing Albinus, Suit-

ably to his character, he resolved to proceed by treachery rather than by force. He wrote to Albinus in the most affectionate terms, as to his dearest brother, but the bearers of the letter were instructed to ask a private audience, as having matters of greater importance to communicate, and then to assassinate him. The suspicions of Albinus, however, being awaked, he put them to the torture, and extracted the truth. He saw that he had no alternative, that he must be emperor or nothing, and he therefore declared himself Augustus, and passed with his army over to Gaul. Severus returned with all possible speed from the East, and advanced in person into Gaul against his rival. He crossed the Alps in the depth of winter, and after some minor engagements, a decisive battle was fought on the 19th of February, 197, in the neighbourhood of Lyons. The united number of the combatants was 150,000 men; the battle was long and dubious, the left wing on each side was routed, but Severus, who now fought for the first time, brought up the prætorians to the support of his beaten troops, and though he received a wound, and was driven back, he rallied them once more, and being supported by the cavalry, under his general, Lætus, he defeated and pursued the enemy to Lyons. The loss on both sides was considerable; Albinus slew himself, and his head was cut off and brought to his ungenerous enemy, who meanly insulted it; his wife and children were at first spared, but they were soon after, it is said, put to death, and their bodies cast into the Rhone.

The city of Lyons was pillaged and burnt; the chief supporters of Albinus, both men and women, Romans and provincials, were put to death, and their properties confiscated. Having spent some time in regulating the affairs of Gaul and Britain, Severus returned to Rome, breathing vengeance against the senate, for he knew that that body was in general more inclined to Albinus than himself, and he had found, among his rival's papers, the letters of several individual senators. The very day after his arrival he addressed them, commending the stern policy of Sulla, Marius and Augustus, and blaming the mildness of Pompeius and Cæsar, which had proved their ruin. He spoke in terms of praise of Commodus, saying that the senate had no right to dishonour him, as many of themselves lived worse than he had done. He expressed himself severely with respect to those who had written letters or sent presents to Albinus. Of these however he pardoned five-and-thirty, but he put to death nine-and-twenty, among

whom was Sulpicianus, the father-in-law of Pertinax. These, however, were not the only victims; the whole family of Nigres, and several other illustrious persons perished. The properties of all were confiscated; for avarice, more perhaps than a thirst of blood, impelled Severus to cruelty.

After a short stay at Rome Severus set out again for the East; for the Parthians, taking advantage of his absence, had invaded Mesopotamia, and laid siege to Nisibis. They retired, however, when they heard of his approach, and Severus, having passed the winter in Syria making preparations for the war, crossed the Tigris the following summer (198) and invested Ctesiphon. The Roman soldiers suffered greatly for want of supplies, and were reduced to feed on roots and herbage, which produced dysenteries, but the emperor persevered, and the city at length was taken. All the full-grown males were massacred, and the women and children, to the number of 100,000, were sold for slaves. As want of supplies did not permit the Romans to remain beyond the Tigris, they returned to Mesopotamia, and on his way to Syria (199) Severus laid siege to the redoubtable Atræ, but he was forced to retire, with a great loss both of men and machines. He renewed the attack some time after (it is uncertain in what year) but with as little success, being obliged to retire with loss and disgrace from before the impregnable fortress.

Severus remained in the East till the year 203. He spent a part of that time in Egypt, where he took great pleasure in examining the pyramids and the other curiosities of that country. He at length returned to Rome, to celebrate the marriage of his elder son.

The family of Severus consisted of his wife and two sons. The empress, named Julia Domna, was a native of Emesa in Syria, whom Severus, who was addicted to astrology, is said to have espoused because she had a royal nativity. She was a woman of great beauty, sense and spirit, and a cultivator of literature and philosophy. The elder son was at first named Bassianus; but his father, at the time of the war against Albinus, created him Cæsar, by the name of Aurelius Antoninus*; and he was subsequently nick-named Caracalla, which

* Severus, not content with expressing his veneration and respect for the memory of M. Aurelius, had the folly to pretend to be his son. "What most amazed us," says Dion (lxxv. 7.), "was his saying that he was the son of Marcus and brother of Commodus."

to avoid confusion, is the name employed by modern historians. In the year 198 Severus created him Augustus, and made him his associate in the empire. The name of the emperor's younger son was Geta, and he also was styled Antoninus.

The bride selected for Caracalla was Plautilla, the daughter of Plautianus, the prætorian prefect. This man was a second Sejanus, and it is very remarkable that two emperors of such superior mental powers as Tiberius and Severus should have been so completely under the influence of their ministers. Plautianus, like his master, was an African by birth; he was of mean extraction, and he seems to have early attached himself to the fortune of his aspiring countryman, whose favour and confidence he won in an extraordinary degree; and when Severus attained the empire, the power of Plautianus grew to such a height, that *he*, the historian observes, was, as it were, emperor, and Severus captain of the guards. Persons like Plautianus, when elevated, rarely bear their faculties meekly. He was therefore proud, cruel and avaricious; he was the chief cause of so many persons of rank and fortune being put to death, in order that he might gain their properties. He seized whatever took his fancy, whether sacred or profane, and he thus amassed such wealth that it was commonly said he was richer than Severus and his sons. Such was his pride, that no one dare approach him without his permission; and when he appeared in public, criers preceded him, ordering that no one should stop and gaze at him, but turn aside and look down. He would not allow his wife to visit or to receive visits, not even excepting the empress. As his power was so great, he was of course the object of universal adulation. The senators and soldiers swore by his fortune, and his statues were set up in all parts of the empire. He was in effect more dreaded and more honoured than the emperor himself.

Such power is, however, unstable in its very nature, and the marriage of his daughter with the son of the emperor caused the downfall of Plautianus. The wedding was celebrated with the utmost magnificence; the dower of the bride, we are told, would have portioned fifty princesses; and as it was the custom of the East for ladies to be attended by eunuchs, Plautianus castrated not less than one hundred persons of noble birth, many of them fathers of families, in order to place them

about his daughter on this occasion. Plautilla was haughty like himself; and Caracalla, who had been forced to marry her, hated father and daughter alike, and resolved on their destruction. He induced one Saturninus and two other centurions to declare that Plautianus had ordered them and seven of their comrades to murder Severus and his son. A written order to this effect was forged and shown to the emperor, who forthwith summoned Plautianus to his presence. He came suspecting nothing; he was admitted, but his followers were excluded. Severus, however, addressed him in a mild tone, and asked him why he had meditated killing him. Plautianus was expressing his surprise and commencing his defence, when Caracalla sprang forward, tore his sword from him, struck him with his fist, and would have slain him with his own hand but for the interference of his father. He then made some of his attendants despatch him, and sent his head to the empress and Plautilla, a joyful sight to the one, a mournful spectacle to the other. Plautilla and her brother Plautius were sent to the isle of Lipara, where they lived in poverty and misery for the remainder of the reign of Severus, and their murder was one of the first acts of Caracalla when emperor.

Severus now remained in Italy for a space of four years, actively engaged in the administration of justice, the regulation of the finances, and the correction of all kinds of abuses. He conferred the important post of prætorian prefect on Papinian, the most renowned of juriconsults; and as it was now a part of this officer's duty to try civil causes, Papinian appointed as his assessors Paulus and Ulpian—names nearly as distinguished in the annals of jurisprudence as his own.

In the year 208, Severus, though far advanced in years and a martyr to the gout, set out for Britain, where the northern tribes had for some time been making their usual incursions into the Roman part of the island. Various motives are assigned for this resolution; the most probable is that he wished to remove his sons from the luxury of Rome and to restore the relaxed discipline of the legions. He entered the wild country north of the Roman wall, cut down the woods, and passed the marshes, and succeeded in penetrating to the extremity of the island, though with a loss, it is said, of 50,000 men; for the barbarians, who would never venture to give him battle, hung on his flanks and rear, formed numerous ambuscades, and cut off all stragglers. In order to check their fu-

ture incursions, he repaired and strengthened the mound or wall which Hadrian had constructed from the Eden to the Tyne.

Severus had associated his second son Geta in the empire the year he came to Britain. But the two brothers hated each other mortally, and Caracalla made little secret of his resolution to reign alone. This abandoned youth, it is said, even attempted to kill his father in the very sight of the Roman legions and the barbarian enemies; for as the emperor was riding one day to receive the arms of the Caledonians, Caracalla drew his sword to stab him in the back; those who were about them cried out, and Severus, on turning round, saw the drawn sword in the hand of his son. He said nothing at the time, but when he returned he called Caracalla with Papinian and the chamberlain Castor to him in private, and causing a sword to be laid before him, rebuked his son, and then told him if he desired his death to slay him with his own hand, or to order Papinian the prefect to do it, who of course would obey him as he was emperor. Caracalla showed no signs of remorse; and though Severus had often blamed M. Aurelius for postponing his public duty to his private affections in the case of Commodus, he himself exhibited even greater and more culpable weakness.

Severus was once more about to take the field against the barbarians, who had renewed their ravages (211), when a severe fit of the gout carried him off at York (*Eboracum*) in the sixty-sixth year of his age, and the eighteenth of his reign.

Though this emperor had passed the greater part of his life in civil rather than military employments, it is remarkable that his government relied more on the arms of the soldiery than that of any of his predecessors, and that more than any he corrupted the military spirit of the nation by excessive indulgence to the soldiers. We have seen the important changes which he made in the prætorian guards, whom he also seems to have been the first to employ on foreign service. Hitherto the legions of the frontiers had maintained something of the appearance of those of the republic, but Severus unstrung the nerves of their discipline by allowing them to have their wives and families in their camps, and to wear gold rings like the knights, and by increasing their pay, and accustoming them to donatives. His dying counsel to his sons, "Be united, enrich the soldiers, despise all others," reveals his principles of despotic government.

CHAPTER V.*

CARACALLA. MACRINUS. ELAGABALUS. ALEXANDER.

A.U. 964-968. A.D. 211-235.

Caracalla and Geta.—Murder of Geta.—Cruelty of Caracalla.—German War.—Parthian War.—Massacre at Alexandria.—Murder of Caracalla.—Macrinus.—His Origin and Character.—Conspiracy against him.—His Defeat and Death.—Elagabalus.—His Superstition and Cruelty.—Adoption of Alexander.—Death of Elagabalus.—Alexander.—Mamæa.—Alexander's Character and Mode of Life.—Murder of Ulpian.—Revolution in Persia.—Persian War.—Alexander in Gaul.—His Murder.—The Roman Army.

M. Aurelius Antoninus Caracalla.

A.U. 964-970. A.D. 211-217.

IN spite of the efforts of Caracalla to the contrary, the army proclaimed the two sons of Severus joint-emperors. The Caledonian war was abandoned, and the emperors returned to Rome to celebrate the obsequies of their father. On the way Caracalla made various attempts on the life of his brother, but Geta was protected by the soldiery, of whom he was the favourite. The brothers adopted every precaution against each other on the road, and at Rome they divided the palace, securing all the approaches to their several portions. The court, the camp, the senate and the people were divided in their affections to the brothers, neither of whom was in reality deserving of the attachment of any man of worth; but Geta had a certain degree of mildness and humanity, of affability and of devotion to literature, which gave him the advantage over his more ferocious brother, and gained him the affection of their mother Julia.

As there seemed no probability of concord between the brothers, a division of the empire was proposed and arranged, by which Caracalla was to retain the European portion, while Geta was to rule in Asia and Egypt, residing at Antioch or Alexandria. This arrangement, it is said, was defeated by the tears and entreaties of Julia; and Caracalla, bent on reigning alone, then resolved on the murder of his brother. At his desire (212) Julia invited her two sons to a meeting in her

* Authorities: Dion, Herodian, the Augustan History, Zosimus, and the Epitomators.

apartments. Geta came suspecting no danger; suddenly some centurions, whom Caracalla had placed in concealment, rushed out and fell on him. He threw himself on his mother's bosom for protection; but her efforts to save him were vain; she herself received a wound in the arm, and was covered with the blood of her murdered son. When the deed was done Caracalla hastened to the camp, crying all the way that a plot had been laid for his life. He flung himself down before the standards in the camp-chapel to return thanks for his preservation; and then addressed the soldiers, assuring them that he was one of themselves, and depended on them alone. He promised to raise their pay one half, and to distribute among them all the treasures accumulated by his father. Such arguments could not fail of convincing, and he was readily proclaimed sole emperor. He thence proceeded to the camp at the Alban Mount*, where he found more difficulty, as the soldiers there were much attached to Geta; but by dint of promises he gained them also to acknowledge him.

Followed by the soldiers, Caracalla then proceeded to the senate-house; he had a cuirass under his robe, and he brought some of his military followers into the house. He justified his conduct by the example of Romulus and others; but he spoke of Geta with regret, and gave him a magnificent funeral, and placed him among the gods†.

The unhappy empress dared not lament the death of her son; she was even obliged to wear an aspect of joy for the safety of the emperor, who all through his reign continued to treat her with respect, and to give her a share in the affairs of state. But on all the other friends and favourers of Geta, both civil and military, he let his vengeance fall without restraint, and the number of those who perished on this account is estimated at twenty thousand. Among these the most regretted was the great Papinian. Caracalla, it is said, wished him to compose an apology for the murder of Geta, but he replied with virtuous intrepidity that it was not so easy to excuse a parricide as to commit it. A soldier cut off his head with an axe, and Caracalla rebuked him for not having used a sword. Fadilla; the surviving daughter of M. Aurelius, was put to death for having lamented Geta. Helvius Pertinax, son of the emperor, Thrasea Priscus, a descendant of the great

* This was a camp of the prætorians also. The troops belonging to it are called the Albanians by the historians.

† "*Sic dixit dummodo non sit visus*," are said to have been his words.

lover of liberty, and many other persons of rank and virtue were involved in the common ruin. To such an extent it is said did Caracalla carry his hatred to his brother, that the comic poets no longer ventured to employ the name of Geta in their plays.

Like Commodus, the emperor devoted most of his time to the Circus and Amphitheatre. In order to defray his enormous expenses he increased the taxes and confiscated all the properties he could lay hold on. When his mother one day blamed him for bestowing such enormous sums on the soldiers, and said that he would soon have no source of revenue remaining, he laid his hand on his sword, and said, in the true spirit of despotism, "Never fear, mother; while we have this we shall not want for money."

One of the acts of Caracalla at this time, was to confer the rights of citizenship, of which the old republicans had been so chary, on all the subjects of the empire.

His restless temper soon urged him to seek for glory in a contest with the Germans. He marched to the Rhine and obtained (by purchase as it would seem) some advantages over the confederacy of the Alemans, who held the territory on its further bank. He henceforth wonderfully affected the Germans, even wearing a blond periwig to resemble them; and he placed a number of them about him as guards. It is thought that it was on the occasion of his return to Rome from Gaul after this war (214), that he distributed among the people the long Gallic coats named *Caracals*, whence he derived the appellation by which he is usually known. After his German war, he marched to the Danube (215), visited the province of Dacia, and had some skirmishes with the neighbouring barbarians. He then passed over to Asia with the intention of making war on the Parthians, and spent the winter at Nicomedia.

As he professed an especial regard for the memory of Achilles, he visited the remains of Ilium, offered sacrifices at the tomb of the hero, led his troops in arms round it, and erected a brazen statue on its summit. One of his freedmen happening to die, or being poisoned by him for the purpose, he acted over again the Homeric funeral of Patroclus, pouring, like Achilles, wine to the winds to induce them to inflame the pyre, and cutting off the hair, with which nature had furnished him most scantily, to cast into the flames. In thus honouring Achilles, he sought to follow the example of

Alexander the Great; a prince of whom his admiration was such, that he erected statues of him everywhere; and he formed a phalanx of sixteen thousand Macedonians armed as in the time of that prince whom he styled the Eastern Augustus. He even persecuted the Peripatetic philosophers, because Aristotle was accused of being concerned in the death of his royal pupil.

In the spring (216) Caracalla set out for Antioch. The Parthians averted a war by the surrender of two persons whom he demanded. By treachery he made himself master of the persons of the king of Armenia and his sons, and of the prince of Edessa; but the Armenians defeated the troops which he sent against them under Theocritus, a common player, whom he had raised to the dignity of prætorian prefect. He then proceeded to Alexandria with the secret resolve of taking a bloody vengeance on the inhabitants of that city for their railleries and witticisms against him on the occasion of the murder of his brother. When he approached the city the people came forth to meet him with all the marks of joy and respect, and he received them graciously and entered the town. Then pretending a design of forming a phalanx in honour of Alexander, he directed all the youth to appear in the plain without the walls. When they had done as required, he went through them as it were to inspect them; and then retiring to the temple of Serapis, he gave the signal to his soldiers to fall on them and massacre them. The slaughter was dreadful both within and without the walls, for no age or rank was spared. Trenches were dug, and the dead and dying were flung into them in order to conceal the extent of the massacre. He deprived the city of all its privileges, and its total ruin was only averted by his death.

After this slaughter of his helpless subjects, Caracalla returned to Antioch, and in order to have a pretext for making war on the Parthians, he sent to Artabanus their king, demanding his daughter in marriage. The Parthian monarch having refused this strange suit, Caracalla invaded and ravaged his territories; and having taken Arbela, where were the royal tombs, he opened them and scattered the bones of the monarchs which were deposited within them. He then took up his winter-quarters in Edessa.

In the spring (217) both sides were engaged in active preparation for war; when a conspiracy in his own army terminated the life and reign of the Roman emperor. Of the two

prætorian prefects, the one, Adventus, was a mere soldier, the other, Macrinus, was a civilian well versed in the laws. The rough and brutal Caracalla often ridiculed him on this account, and even menaced his life; and Macrinus, having got sure information that his destruction was designed, resolved to anticipate the tyrant. He accordingly communicated his designs to some of the officers of the guards, among whom was one Martial, whom Caracalla had mortally offended by refusing him the post of centurion, or as others say, by putting his brother to death. Accordingly on the 8th of April, 217, as the emperor was riding from Edessa to Carrhæ in order to worship at the temple of the Moon, and had retired and alighted for a private occasion, Martial ran up as if called, and stabbed him in the throat. The emperor fell down dead. Martial mounted his horse and fled; but he was shot by a Scythian archer of the guard.

M. Opilius Macrinus.

A.U. 970-971. A.D. 217-218.

When the news of the murder of the emperor was divulged, Macrinus was the first to hasten to the spot, and to deplore his death. As Caracalla had left no heir, the army was uncertain whom to proclaim emperor in his stead, and the empire was for four days without a chief. Meantime the officers who were in the interests of Macrinus, used all their influence with their men, and on the fourth day he was saluted emperor. He accepted the office with feigned reluctance, and he distributed, according to custom, large sums of money among the soldiers. Adventus was the bearer of the ashes of Caracalla to Rome, where they were deposited in the tomb of the Antonines; and Macrinus and the senate were obliged to yield to the instances of the soldiers, and place the monster among the gods. The senate received with joy the letter in which Macrinus announced his elevation to the empire, and they decreed him all the usual titles and honours.

While these changes were taking place in the Roman empire, Artabanus had passed the Tigris with a large army. Macrinus, having in vain proposed terms of accommodation,

led out his legions, and some fighting took place in the neighbourhood of Nisibis, in which the advantage was on the side of the Parthians; but as they now began to feel the want of supplies, and were anxious to return home, they readily listened to the renewed proposals of the Roman emperor, and a peace was concluded. Macrinus then led his troops back to Antioch for the winter.

Macrinus, as we have already observed, was not a military man. He was a native of Cæsarea in Africa (*Algiers*), of humble origin, and he was indebted for his elevation to his countryman Plantianus. He was a man of an amiable disposition, and a sincere lover of justice. He therefore turned his attention chiefly to civil regulations, and he made some necessary reforms and excellent laws; but he was timid by nature, and in his anxiety to serve and advance his friends, he did not sufficiently consider their fitness for the employments which he bestowed on them. He committed a great and irreparable fault in not setting out for Rome at once, and in keeping the army all together in Syria; and he farther commenced too soon a necessary, but imprudent attempt at bringing back the discipline of the legions to what it had been under Severus; for though he applied it only to recruits and did not interfere with the old soldiers, these last apprehended that the reform would at length reach themselves, and they became highly discontented. This feeling of the soldiers was soon taken advantage of, and a rival set up to Macrinus.

The empress Julia was at Antioch at the time of the murder of Caracalla. Macrinus wrote to her in very obliging terms; but in the first transports of her grief at the death of her son or the loss of her power, she had given herself several blows on the breast, and thus irritated a cancer with which she was afflicted, and her death ensued. Her sister, named Mæsa, who had lived at court during the two last reigns and had acquired immense wealth, retired by order of Macrinus to her native town of Emesa. She had two daughters named Soëmis and Mamaë, each of whom was a widow with an only son; that of the former was named Bassianus; he was now a handsome youth of seventeen years of age, and the influence of his family had procured for him the lucrative priesthood of the Sun, who was worshiped at Emesa under the title of Elagabalus. The Roman troops who were encamped near the town, used to frequent the temple, and they greatly admired the comely young priest, whom they knew to

be a cousin of their lamented Caracalla. The artful Mæsa resolved to take advantage of that feeling, and she made no scruple to sacrifice the reputation of her daughters to the hopes of empire: she therefore declared (what was perhaps true) that Caracalla used to cohabit with her daughters in the palace, and that Bassianus was in reality his son. Her assertion, backed with large sums of money and lavish promises of more, found easy acceptance with the soldiers. On the night of the 15th of May, 218, she and her daughter and grandson, and the rest of her family, conducted by their eunuch Gannys, a man of great talent, stole out of the city and proceeded to the camp, where they were joyfully received; and Bassianus was proclaimed emperor by the title of M. Aurelius Antoninus. The camp was immediately put into a state of defence against a siege; and numbers of the other soldiers hastened to sustain the cause of the son of Caracalla.

Macrinus sent the prætorian prefect Ulpius Julianus against the rebels. This officer was successful in his first attack on their camp; but having neglected to push his advantage, he gave the enemy time for tampering with his troops, a part of whom abandoned him; and he was taken and slain. Macrinus had meantime advanced as far as Apamea; where he declared his son Diadumenianus, a boy of only ten years of age, Augustus; and took this opportunity of promising a large gratuity to the army: he also wrote against Bassianus to the senate and governors of provinces. But instead of advancing rapidly against the rebels, he fell back to Antioch, whither they speedily followed him, and he was forced to give them battle near that town. The troops of Bassianus were ably disposed by the eunuch Gannys, who now in arms for the first time in his life showed the talents of a general. But the prætorians on the side of Macrinus fought with such determined valour that the rebels were on the point of flying, when Mæsa and Soæmis rushed out and stopped them; and Bassianus sword in hand led them on to the combat. Still the prætorians gave not way, and victory would have declared for Macrinus had he not dastardly fled in the midst of the battle. His troops when assured of his flight declared for Bassianus.

Macrinus fled in disguise, and never stopped till he came to Chalcedon, where he was taken and put to death, and his innocent son shared his fate. His reign had lasted only fourteen months.

M. Aurelius Antoninus Elagabalus.

A.U. 971-975. A.D. 218-222.

From Antioch Elagabalus*, as we shall henceforth style him, wrote to the senate a letter replete with abuse of Macrinus, and promising that he himself would take Augustus and M. Aurelius for his models. From ignorance or from arrogance he assumed in it the title of Augustus and others, which the senate had been hitherto in the habit of conferring. They bitterly lamented the cowardice of Macrinus and his error in not coming to Rome, but they submitted, though with a sigh, to the rule of the pretended son of Caracalla.

Elagabalus passed the winter at Nicomedia. While there, he put to death with his own hand Gannys, who had been the chief means of procuring him the empire, but who now wished to make him lead a regular and decorous life. Several persons of rank, both at Rome and in the provinces, had already perished by his orders, and men had little hopes of seeing the public good promoted by the new emperor.

As soon as the season permitted (219), Mæsa, who was impatient to return to Rome, urged her grandson to commence his journey. He had sometime before sent thither his picture, with orders to have it hung up over the statue of Victory in the senate-house. In this, which was a full-length portrait, he appeared habited in the long loose Asiatic dress, with collars and necklaces and a tiara set with gold and precious stones on his head; and in this attire the senate and people beheld him entering the capital, Mæsa having essayed in vain to make him assume the Roman habit. He gave the usual shows and distributions of money to the people. On the first day of his appearance in the senate he caused his grandmother to be invited thither, and she took her seat by that of the consuls, and henceforth acted in all respects as one of the members. His mother held a senate of her own, composed of ladies, who regulated all matters relating to dress, precedence, and other matters of importance to the sex.

The great object of the emperor's life was the exaltation of the god of Emesa. The conical black stone which represented him was brought to Rome, and a stately temple was built on the Palatine to receive it; and the pious emperor proposed to

* So he is more correctly named by the Greek writers; the Latins name him Heliogabalus.

transport thither the Palladium, the Ancilia, and all the sacred pledges of the empire, and thus to make it the centre of Roman religion. He also built for his god a temple in the suburbs, whither the sacred stone was conveyed every spring in a magnificent car drawn by six milk-white horses, whose reins the emperor himself held, walking backwards before them with his eyes fixed on the image. The people flung flowers and garlands in the way; the knights and the army joined in the procession, and when it reached the temple, gold and silver cups, garments, and all kinds of animals except swine, were flung to the people to scramble for. Deeming it necessary that his god should have a wife, the emperor first selected Minerva for his bride, and removed her image to the palace for the wedding; but then considering that her rough and martial nature would make her an unsuitable mate for the soft luxurious Syrian deity, he gave the preference to the Astarte or Urania of Carthage; and her image, accompanied with much treasure by way of dowry, was brought to Rome and placed in the temple of the sun-god.

Elagabalus himself married four different wives, one of whom was a Vestal, which he assured the senate was a most fitting union, as between a priest and a priestess. We dare not sully our pages with the catalogue of his unnatural lusts and other excesses; suffice it to say, that the enormities of Tiberius and Nero were equalled if not outdone by this wretched abandoned youth. The basest and most vicious of mankind were promoted to the highest offices, and the revenues of the empire were wasted with reckless prodigality.

The sagacious Mæsa saw the inevitable consequences of this wanton course, and she resolved to provide for the continuance of her power; she therefore persuaded Elagabalus to adopt and declare as Cæsar his cousin Alexianus, a boy four years younger than himself. He yielded to her desire and adopted him in presence of the senate, giving him the name of Alexander, under the direction, he said, of his god. He at first sought to corrupt his morals and make him like himself, but the disposition of Alexander was naturally good, and his mother, Mamæa, took care to supply him with excellent masters. He then endeavoured to have him secretly destroyed, but he could find no agent, and Mæsa discovered and disconcerted all his plans.

The soldiers had long been disgusted with the vices and the effeminacy of the emperor, and all their hopes were placed on

the young Alexander. The rage of Elagabalus against that youth became at length so great that he resolved to annul the adoption, and he sent orders to the senate and soldiers no longer to give him the title of Caesar. The consequence was a mutiny in the camp, and he was obliged to proceed thither accompanied by Alexander, and agree to dismiss all the companions and agents of his vices, and to promise a reformation of his life. He thus escaped the present danger, but his violent hatred of Alexander soon induced him to make a new effort to destroy him. To ascertain the temper of the soldiers he caused a report to be spread of the death of that prince. A tumult instantly arose, which was only appeased by his appearing in the camp with Alexander; but finding how quickly it then subsided, he thought he might venture on punishing some of the ringleaders. The tumult again broke out; Soæmis and Mamaea animated their respective partizans, those of the latter proved victorious, and the wretched Elagabalus was dragged from a privy in which he had concealed himself, and slain in the arms of his mother, who shared his fate. A stone was fastened to his body, which was flung into the Tiber. Almost all his minions and ministers fell victims to the popular vengeance.

M. Aurelius Alexander Severus.

A.U. 975-988. A.D. 222-235.

Both the senate and the army joyfully concurred in the elevation of Alexander to the empire; and the former body, lest any competitor should appear, hastened to confer on him all the imperial titles and powers. On account of his youth and his extremely amiable disposition he was entirely directed by his grandmother and mother, but Mæsa dying soon after his accession, the sole direction of her son fell to Mamaea. There is some reason to suppose that this able woman had embraced the Christian religion, now so prevalent throughout the empire; at all events, in her guidance of public affairs she exhibited a spirit of wisdom, justice, and moderation such as had not appeared in any preceding empress. Her enemies laid to her charge the love of power and the love of money, and blamed her son for deferring too much to her; but their ac-

cusations are vague, and no act of cruelty caused by avarice stains the annals of this reign.

The first care of Mamæa was to form a wise and upright council for her son. Sixteen of the most respectable of the senate, with the learned Ulpian, the prætorian prefect, at their head, composed this council, and nothing was ever done without their consent and approbation. A general system of reformation was commenced and steadily pursued. All the absurd acts of the late tyrant were reversed. His god was sent back to Emesa; the statues of the other deities were restored to their temples; the ministers of his vices and pleasures were sold or banished, some of the worst were drowned; the unworthy persons whom he had placed in public situations were dismissed, and men of knowledge and probity put in their places.

Mamæa used the utmost care to keep away from her son all those persons by whom his morals might be corrupted, and in order to have his time fully occupied she induced him to devote the greater part of each day to the administration of justice, where none but the wise and good would be his associates. The good seed fortunately fell into a kindly soil. Alexander was naturally disposed to every virtue, and all his efforts were directed to the promotion of the welfare of the empire over which he ruled.

The first ten years of the reign of this prince were passed at Rome and devoted to civil occupations. His daily course of life has been thus transmitted to us. He usually rose early and entered his private chapel (*lararium*), in which he had caused to be placed the images of those who had been teachers and benefactors of the human race, among whom he included the divine founder of the Christian religion. Having performed his devotions, he took some kind of exercise, and then applied himself for some hours to public business with his council. He then read for some time, his favourite works being the republics of Plato and Cicero, and the verses of Horace, and the life of Alexander the Great, whom he greatly admired. Gymnastic exercises, in which he excelled, succeeded. He then was anointed and bathed, and took a light breakfast, usually of bread, milk, and eggs. In the afternoon he was attended by his secretaries, and he heard his letters read and signed the answers to them. The business of the day being concluded, his friends in general were admitted, and a frugal and simple dinner followed, at which the conversation

was mostly of a serious instructive nature, or some literary work was read out to the emperor and his guests.

The dress of Alexander was plain and simple; his manners were free from all pride and haughtiness; he lived with the senators on a footing of friendly equality, like Augustus, Vespasian, and the wiser and better emperors. He was liberal and generous to all orders of the people, and he took an especial pleasure in assisting those persons of good family who had fallen into poverty without reproach. Among the virtues of Alexander was the somewhat rare one in that age of chastity. His mother early caused him to espouse a lady of noble birth named Memnia, whom however he afterwards divorced and even banished to Africa. The accounts of this affair differ greatly. According to one, the father of the empress formed a conspiracy against his son-in-law, which being discovered he was put to death and his daughter divorced. Others say that as Alexander showed great respect for his father-in-law, Mamæa's jealousy was excited, and she caused him to be slain and his daughter to be divorced or banished. It appears that Alexander soon married again.

We have already observed that a portion of the civil jurisdiction had fallen to the prætorian prefects. This imposed a necessity that one of them should be a civilian, and Mamæa had therefore caused this dignity to be conferred on Ulpian. From the love of law and order which distinguished this prefect, he naturally sought to bring back discipline in the prætorian camp; the consequence was that repeated attempts were made on his life, and the emperor more than once found it necessary to cast his purple over him to save him from the fury of the soldiers. At length (228) they fell on him in the night; he escaped from them to the palace, but they pursued and slaughtered him in the presence of the emperor and his mother.

Some slight actions on the German and Moorish frontiers were the only occupation given to the Roman arms during the early years of the reign of Alexander, but in the year 232 so powerful an enemy menaced the oriental provinces of the empire, that the presence of the emperor became absolutely requisite in the East.

The Parthians, whom we have had such frequent occasion to mention, are said to have been a Scythian (*i. e.* Turkish) people of the north of Persia, who, taking advantage of the declining power of the Macedonian kings of Syria, cast off

their yoke (B.C. 250), and then gradually made themselves masters of the whole of Persia. Their dominion had now lasted for five hundred years, and their power had been long on the decline from the usual causes, family dissensions, contested successions, and such like. In the fourth year of Alexander Severus (226) a native Persian, named Artaxerxes (*Ardshir*), who pretended to be of the ancient royal line, but who is said to have been of humble birth and a mere soldier of fortune, raised a rebellion against the Parthian king, Artabanus. Fortune favoured the rebel, and Artabanus was defeated and slain. Artaxerxes then assumed the tiara, and his line, which existed till the Mohammedan conquest, was named the Sassanian, from the name of his father.

Affecting to be the descendant of the ancient Achæmenians, Artaxerxes sought to restore Persia to its condition under those princes. The Magian or Light-religion resumed the rank from which it had fallen under the sway of the Parthians, and flourished in its pristine glory. As the dominions of the house of Cyrus had extended to the coasts of the Ægean sea, Artaxerxes ordered the Romans to quit Asia, and when his mandate was unheeded he led his troops over the Tigris. But his ill fortune induced him to attack the invincible Atræa, and he was forced to retire with loss and disgrace. He then turned his arms against the Medes and some other of the more northern tribes, and when he had reduced them he again invaded Mesopotamia (232). Alexander now resolved to take the command of his troops in person. He left Rome, followed by the tears and prayers of the people, and proceeded through Illyricum to the East. On his march the strictest discipline was maintained, while every attention was paid to the wants of the soldiers, and care taken that they should be abundantly supplied with clothes and arms. The emperor himself used the same fare as the men, and he caused his tent to be thrown open when he was at his meals that they might perceive his mode of life.

Alexander halted at Antioch to make preparations for the war: meantime he sent an embassy with proposals of peace to Artaxerxes. The Persian in return sent four hundred of his most stately men splendidly clothed and armed to order the Romans to quit Asia; and if we can believe Herodian (for the circumstance is almost incredible), Alexander was so regardless of the laws of nations as to seize and strip them, and

send them prisoners to Phrygia. It is also said that while he was at Antioch, finding that some of the soldiers frequented the Paphian grove of Daphne, he cast them into prison; and that when a mutiny broke out in the legion to which they belonged, he ascended his tribunal, had the prisoners brought before him, and addressed their comrades, who stood around in arms, dwelling on the necessity of maintaining discipline. But when his arguments proved of no effect, and they even menaced him with their arms, he cried out, in imitation of Cæsar*, "Quirites, depart, and lay down your arms." The legion obeyed, and the men, no longer soldiers, took up their abode in the houses of the town instead of the camp. After a month the emperor was prevailed on to pardon them, but he punished their tribunes with death; and this legion was henceforth equally distinguished by valour and fidelity.

In imitation of Alexander the Great, the emperor formed six of his legions into a phalanx of thirty thousand men, to whom he gave higher pay. He also had, like that conqueror, bodies of men distinguished by gold-adorned and silver-adorned shields—Chrysoaspids and Argyroaspids.

The details of the war cannot be learned with any certainty. One historian says that Alexander made three divisions of his army; one of which was to enter Media through Armenia, another Persia at the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates, while the emperor was in person to lead the third through Mesopotamia, and all were to join in the enemy's country; but that owing to the timidity of Alexander, who loitered on the way, the second division was cut to pieces, and the first nearly all perished while retreating through Armenia in the winter. This account labours under many difficulties; for the emperor certainly triumphed on his return to Rome; and in his speech to the senate on that occasion, he asserted, that of 700 war-elephants which were in the enemy's array he had killed 200, and taken 300; of 1000 scythed chariots he had taken 200; and of 120,000 heavy-armed horsemen he had slain 10,000, beside taking a great number of prisoners. It further appears, that though Alexander did not remain in the East, the Persian monarch made no further attempts on Mesopotamia for some years.

The Germans had taken advantage of the absence of the emperor and the greater part of the troops in the East, to pass the Rhine and ravage Gaul. Alexander therefore leaving

* Hist. of Rome, p. 439.

sufficient garrisons in Syria, led home the Illyrian and other legions, and having celebrated a triumph for the Persian war at Rome, where he was received with the most abundant demonstrations of joy, he departed with a large army for the defence of Gaul. The Germans retired at his approach; he advanced to the Rhine and took up his winter-quarters in the neighbourhood of Mentz, with the intention of opening the campaign beyond the river in the spring (235).

The narratives of the events of this reign are so very discordant, that we cannot hope often to arrive at the real truth. In no part are they more at variance than in their account of the circumstances of the emperor's death. We can only collect that, whether from his efforts to restore discipline, from the intrigues of Maximin, an ambitious officer who had the charge of disciplining the young troops, or from some other cause, a general discontent prevailed in the army, and that Alexander was assassinated in his tent, either by his own guards or by a party sent for the purpose by Maximin, and that his mother and several of his friends perished with him. The troops forthwith proclaimed Maximin emperor, and the senate and people of Rome, deeply lamenting the fate of the virtuous Alexander, were forced to acquiesce in the choice of the army.

Alexander had reigned thirteen years. Even the historian least partial to him, acknowledges that toward his subjects his conduct was blameless, and that no bloodshed or unjust condemnations stain the annals of his reign. His fault seems to have been a certain degree of effeminacy and weakness, the consequence probably of his Syrian origin, which led to his extreme submission to his mother, against whom the charges of avarice and meanness are not perhaps wholly unfounded*.

Dion Cassius, whose history ends with this reign, gives the following view of the numbers and disposition of the legions at this period†. Of the twenty-five which were formed by Augustus‡, only nineteen remained, the rest having been broken or distributed through the others; but the emperors, from Nero to Severus inclusive, had formed thirteen new ones, and the whole now amounted to thirty-two legions. Of these, three were in Britain, one in Upper and two in Lower

* The Life of Alexander, by Lampridius, in the Augustan History, is, as Gibbon observes, "the mere idea of a perfect prince, an awkward imitation of the Cyropædia."

† Dion, iv. 23.

‡ See above, p. 35.

Germany, one in Italy, one in Spain, one in Numidia, one in Arabia, two in Palestine, one in Phœnicia, two in Syria, two in Mesopotamia, two in Cappadocia, two in Lower and one in Upper Moesia, two in Dacia, and four in Pannonia, one in Noricum, and one in Rætia. The historian does not tell us where the two remaining ones were quartered, neither does he give the number of men in a legion at this time, but it is conjectured to have been five thousand.

CHAPTER VI.*

MAXIMIN. PUPIENUS, BALBINUS AND GORDIAN. PHILIP.
DECIUS. GALLUS. ÆMILIAN. VALERIAN. GALLIENUS.

A.U. 988-1021. A.D. 235-268.

The Empire.—Maximin.—His Tyranny.—Insurrection in Africa.—The Gordians.—Pupienus and Balbinus.—Death of Maximin.—Murder of the Emperors.—Gordian.—Persian War.—Murder of Gordian.—Philip.—Secular Games.—Decius.—Death of Philip.—The Goths.—Gothic War.—Death of Decius.—Gallus.—Æmilian.—Valerian.—The Franks.—The Alemans.—Gothic Invasions.—Persian War.—Defeat and Captivity of Valerian.—Gallienus.—The Thirty Tyrants.—Death of Gallienus.

C. Julius Verus Maximinus.

A.U. 988-991. A.D. 235-238.

As we advance through the history of the Roman empire we find it deteriorating at every step, the traces of civil government becoming continually more and more evanescent, and the power of the sword the only title under which obedience could be claimed. The government had, in fact, been a military despotism from the time of Augustus, but that prudent prince and the best of his successors had concealed the odious truth beneath the forms of law and civil regulations; and perhaps it may be considered that his own reign and the eighty-four years from Domitian to Commodus, are among the periods of the greatest happiness which mankind have enjoyed, absolute power being wielded by wisdom and goodness. Human nature, however, does not permit such a

* Authorities: Herodian, the Augustan History, Zosimus, and the Epi-
tomators.

state to endure, and the thirteen years of Alexander Severus form but a gleam of sunshine in the political gloom of the succeeding century.

Elective monarchy is an evil of the greatest magnitude. He who cannot transmit his dominion to his son, will be in general little solicitous about its future condition. Nothing was further from the intention of the founder of the Roman empire than that such should be its condition, yet Providence seems to have designedly thwarted all the efforts made to form an hereditary monarchy. The Cæsarian family, and the good emperors, as they are called, were but a series of adoptions; a son sometimes succeeded his father, but from Augustus till nearly the end of the empire the imperial power never reached the third generation. The fiction of the two Syrian youths having been sons of Caracalla, was the last faint effort made in favour of the hereditary principle; with Maximin commenced a new order, and every soldier might now aspire to empire.

Maximin was originally a Thracian peasant, of enormous size and strength; his stature, we are told, exceeded eight feet; his wife's bracelet made him a thumb-ring; he could draw a loaded waggon, break a horse's leg with a kick, and crumble sandstones in his hands; he often, it is added, ate forty pounds of meat in the day, and washed them down with seven gallons of wine. Hence he was named Hercules, Antæus, and Milo of Croton. He became known to the emperor Severus on the occasion of his celebrating the birthday of his son Geta one time in Thrace. The young barbarian approached him, and in broken Latin craved permission to wrestle with some of the strongest of the camp-followers; he vanquished sixteen of them, and received as many prizes, and was admitted into the service. A couple of days after, Severus seeing him exulting at his good fortune, spoke to a tribune about him, and Maximin perceiving that he was the object of the emperor's discourse, began to run on foot by his horse; Severus to try his speed put his horse to the gallop, but the young soldier kept up with him till the aged emperor was tired. Severus asked him if he felt inclined to wrestle after his running, he replied in the affirmative, and overthrew seven of the strongest soldiers. He rose rapidly in the service under Severus and his son; he retired to his native village when Macrinus seized the empire; he disdained to serve Elagabalus, but the accession of Alexander induced him to return to

Rome. He received the command of a legion, was made a senator, and the emperor even had thoughts of giving his sister in marriage to the son of the Thracian peasant.

The first care of Maximin when raised to the empire, was to dismiss from their employments all who were in the council or family of his predecessor, and several were put to death as conspirators. He speedily displayed the native ferocity of his temper; for when having completed a bridge of boats over the Rhine commenced by Alexander, he was preparing to pass over into Germany, a conspiracy headed by one Magnus, a consular, was discovered, the plan of which was to loose the further end of the bridge when Maximin had passed over, and thus to leave him in the hands of the Germans; and meantime Magnus was to be proclaimed emperor. On this occasion he massacred upwards of four thousand persons, without any form of trial whatever; and he was accused of having invented the conspiracy with this design.

A revolt of the eastern archers*, which occurred a few days after, being quelled, Maximin led his army into Germany. As no large force opposed him, he wasted and burned the country through an extent of four hundred miles. Occasional skirmishes took place in the woods and marshes, which gave Maximin opportunities of displaying his personal prowess; and he caused pictures of his victories to be painted, which he sent to Rome to be placed at the door of the senate-house.

Maximin employed the two first years of his reign in wars against the Germans and the Sarmatians. His winter residence was Sirmium in Pannonia, and he never condescended to visit Italy. But his absence was no benefit; for Italy and all parts of the empire groaned alike beneath his merciless tyranny. The vile race of Delators once more came into life; men of all ranks were dragged from every part of the empire to Pannonia, where some were sewed up in the skins of animals, others were exposed to wild beasts, others beaten to death with clubs, and the properties of all were confiscated. This had been the usual course of the preceding despotism, and the people in general therefore took little heed of it; but Maximin stretched his rapacious hands to the corporate funds of the cities of the empire, which were destined to the support or the amusement of the people; and he seized on the

* It was now the practice to have bodies of archers from the East in the Roman service.

treasures of the temples, and stripped the public edifices of their ornaments. The spirit of disaffection thus excited was general, and even his soldiers were wearied of his severity and cruelty.

The whole empire was now therefore ripe for revolt; the rapacity of the procurator of Africa caused it to break out in that province (237). This officer, who was worthy of his master, had condemned two young men of rank to pay such sums as would have quite ruined them. In despair, they assembled the peasantry on their estates, and having gained over a part of the soldiers, they one night surprised the procurator, and slew himself and those who defended him. Knowing that they had no safety but in a general revolt, they resolved to offer the empire to M. Antonius Gordianus, the governor of the province, an illustrious senator of the venerable age of eighty years. They came to him as he was resting after giving audience in the morning, and flinging the purple of a standard over him saluted him Augustus. Gordian declined the proffered dignity, but when he reflected that Maximin would never pardon a man who had been proclaimed emperor, he deemed it the safer course to run the hazard of the contest, and he consented to accept the empire, making his son his colleague. He then proceeded to Carthage, whence he wrote to the senate and people, and his friends at Rome, notifying his elevation to the empire.

The intelligence was received with the greatest joy at Rome. The two Gordians were declared Augusti; and Maximin, and his son, whom he had associated with him in the empire, and their friends, public enemies, and rewards were promised to those who would kill them; but the decree was ordered to be kept secret till all the necessary preparations should have been made. Soon after it was given out that Maximin was slain. The edicts of the Gordians were then published, their images and letters were carried into the prætorian camp, and forthwith the people rose in fury, cast down and broke the images of Maximin, fell on and massacred his officers and the informers; and many seized this pretext for getting rid of their creditors and their private enemies. Murder and pillage prevailed through the city. The senate meantime having advanced too far to recede, wrote a circular to all the governors of provinces, and appointed twenty of their body to put Italy into a state of defence.

Maximin was preparing to cross the Danube against the

Sarmatians when he heard of what had taken place at Rome. His rage and fury passed all bounds. He menaced the whole of the senate with bonds or death, and promised their properties, and those of the Africans, to his soldiers; but finding that they did not show all the alacrity he had expected, he began to fear for his power. His spirits, however, soon rose when tidings came that his rivals were no more: for Capellianus, governor of Mauretania, being ordered by the Gordians to quit that province, marched against Carthage at the head of a body of legionaries and Moors. The younger Gordian gave him battle, and was defeated and slain, and his father on hearing the melancholy tidings strangled himself. Capellianus pillaged Carthage and the other towns, and exercised all the rights of a conqueror (237).

When the fatal tidings reached Rome the consternation was great, but the senate, seeing they could not now recede, chose as emperors in the place of the Gordians, M. Clodius Pupienus Maximus and D. Cælius Balbinus, the former to conduct the military, the latter the civil affairs of the state. To satisfy the people, a grandson of the elder Gordian, a boy of twelve years of age, was associated with them as a Cæsar.

The new emperors were elected about the beginning of July, and Pupienus forthwith left Rome to oppose Maximin. The remainder of the year was spent on both sides in making preparations for the war, and in the following spring (238) Maximin put his troops in motion for Italy. He passed the Alps unopposed, but found the gates of Aquileia closed against him. His offers of pardon being rejected, he laid siege to the town, which was defended with the obstinacy of despair. Ill success augmented the innate ferocity of Maximin; he put to death several of his officers; these executions irritated the soldiers, who were besides suffering all kinds of privations, and discontent became general. As Maximin was reposing one day at noon in his tent, a party of the Alban soldiers* approached it with the intention of killing him. They were joined by his guards, and when he awoke and came forth with his son they would not listen to him, but killed them both on the spot, and cut off their heads. Maximin's principal ministers shared his fate. His reign had lasted only three years.

* See above, p. 207.

*M. Clodius Pupienus Maximus, D. Cælius Balbinus, and
M. Antonius Gordianus.*

A.U. 991-997. A.D. 238-244.

The joy at Rome was extreme when the news of the death of Maximin arrived. Pupienus, who was at Ravenna, hastened to Aquileia, and received the submission of the army. He distributed money to the legions, and then sending them back to their usual quarters, returned to Rome with the prætorians and a part of the army of the Rhine, in which he could confide. He and his colleagues entered the city in a kind of triumph.

The administration of Pupienus and Balbinus was of the best kind, and the senate and people congratulated themselves on the choice they had made. But the prætorians were far from being contented; they felt as if robbed of their right of appointing an emperor; and they were annoyed at the German troops being retained in the city, as arguing a distrust of themselves. Unfortunately, too, there prevailed a secret jealousy between the two emperors, and it is probable that concord would not long have subsisted between them under any circumstances.

The prætorians having to no purpose sought a pretext for getting rid of the emperors, at length took advantage of the celebration of the Capitoline games, at which almost every one was present, and the emperors remained nearly alone in the palace. They proceeded thither in fury. Pupienus, when aware of their approach, proposed to send for the Germans, but Balbinus, fearing that it was meant to employ them against himself, refused his consent. Meantime the prætorians arrived, forced the entrance, seized the two aged emperors, tore their garments, treated them with every kind of indignity, and were dragging them to their camp, till hearing that the Germans were coming to their aid, they killed them and left their bodies lying in the street. They carried the young Gordian with them to their camp, where they proclaimed him emperor, and the senate, the people, and the provinces readily acquiesced in his elevation.

The youthful emperor was the object of general affection; the soldiers called him their child, the senate their son, the people their delight. He was of a lively and agreeable tem-

per; and he was zealous in the acquisition of knowledge, in order that he might not be deceived by those about him. In the first years, however, of his reign, public affairs were indifferently managed. His mother, who was not a Mamæa, allowed her eunuchs and freedmen to sell all the great offices of the state (perhaps she shared in their gains), and in consequence many improper appointments were made. But the marriage of the young emperor (241) brought about a thorough reformation. He espoused the daughter of Misitheus, a man distinguished in the cultivation of letters, and he made his father-in-law his prætorian prefect, and guided himself by his counsels. Misitheus, who was a man of virtue and talent as well as of learning, discharged the duties of his office in the ablest manner.

A Persian war soon called the emperor to the East (242). Sapor (*Shahpoor*), the son and successor of Artaxerxes, had invaded Mesopotamia, taken Nisibis, Carrhæ, and other towns, and menaced Antioch. But the able conduct of Misitheus, when the emperor arrived in Syria, speedily assured victory to the Roman arms; the towns were all recovered, and the Persian monarch was obliged to repass the Tigris. Unfortunately for Gordian and the empire, Misitheus died in the following year (243), to the great regret of the whole army, by whom he was both beloved and feared. The office of prætorian prefect was given to M. Julius Philippus, who is accused, though apparently without reason, of having caused the death of his predecessor. Now, however, having in effect the command of the army, Philip aspired to the empire. He spoke disparagingly of the youth of Gordian; he contrived, by diverting the supplies, to cause the army to be in want, and then laid the blame on the emperor. At length (244), after a victory gained over the Persians on the banks of the Abora, he led the troops into a country where no provisions could be procured: a mutiny in consequence ensued, in which the emperor was slain, and Philip was proclaimed in his place. Gordian was only nineteen years of age when he met his untimely fate; he had reigned five years and eight months. The soldiers raised him a tomb on the spot, and the senate placed him among the gods.

M. Julius Philippus.

A.U. 997-1002. A.D. 244-249.

The adventurer who had now attained the imperial purple was an Arab by birth, and it is even pretended a Christian in religion. He probably entered the Roman service in his youth, and gradually rose to rank in the army.

Being anxious to proceed to Rome, Philip lost no time in concluding a treaty with Sapor. He then, after a short stay at Antioch, set out for Italy. At Rome he used every means to conciliate the senators by liberality and kindness, and he never mentioned the late emperor but in terms of respect. To gain the affections of the people, he formed a reservoir to supply with water the part of the city beyond the Tiber.

In the fifth year of his reign (248), Rome having then attained her one thousandth year, Philip, in conjunction with his son, now associated with him in the empire, celebrated with great magnificence the secular games. These had been already solemnised by Augustus, by Claudius, by Domitian, and Severus, and Rome now witnessed them for the last time.

Philip would appear to have acted unwisely in committing extensive commands to his own relations; for in Syria, where his brother Priscus, and in Mœsia, where his father-in-law Severianus commanded, rival emperors were proclaimed. The Syrian rebel was named Jotapianus; the Mœsian was a centurion, named P. Carvilius Marinus. Philip, it is said, in alarm, called on the senate to support him or to accept his resignation (249); but while the other senators maintained silence, Decius, a man of rank and talent, re-assured him, speaking slightly of the rebels, and asserting that they could not stand against him. His prediction proved correct, for they both were shortly after slain. Philip then obliged Decius, much, it is said, against his inclination, to take the command of the Mœsian and Pannonian legions. But when Decius reached the army the soldiers insisted on investing him with the purple. He wrote to the emperor assuring him of his fidelity; but Philip would not trust to his declarations, and leaving his son at Rome with a part of the prætorians, he put himself at the head of his troops to chastise him. The armies met near Verona; Philip was defeated and slain,

and when the news reached Rome the prætorians slew his son and proclaimed Decius.

C. Messius Quintus Trajanus Decius.

A.U. 1002-1004. A.D. 249-251.

Decius was born at Bubalia, a town near Sirmium in Pannonia. He was either forty-eight or fifty-eight years of age, it is uncertain which, when he was proclaimed emperor; and from the imperfect accounts which we have of his reign, he would seem to have been a man of considerable ability. His reign was, however, brief and unquiet. It had hardly commenced when he had to go in person to quell an insurrection in Gaul, and all the rest of it was occupied in war with the Goths.

This people, whose original seats seem to have been the Scandinavian peninsula, had at an early period crossed the Baltic, and settled on its southern coast. They had gradually advanced southwards, and they now had reached the Euxine. In the time of Alexander Severus they had made inroads into Dacia; and in that of Philip they ravaged both that province and Mœsia. In the first year of Decius (250) the Gothic king Cniva passed the Danube at the head of 70,000 warriors, and laid siege to the town of Eustesium (*Novi*); being repelled by the Roman general Gallus he advanced against Nicopolis, whence he was driven by the emperor or his son (it is uncertain which) with a loss of 30,000 men. Undismayed by his reverses he crossed Mount Hæmus, in the hope of surprising Philippopolis; Decius followed him, but his camp at Beræa was surprised by the Goths, and his troops were cut to pieces. Philippopolis stood a siege of some duration; but it was taken, and the greater part of its inhabitants were massacred. The Goths now spread their ravages into Macedonia, the governor of which, Philip's brother Priscus, assumed the purple under their protection.

It seems most probable that it was the younger Decius who met with these reverses, for the emperor must have been at Rome, as we find that on his leaving it (251) to direct the Gothic war, a person named Julius Valens was declared emperor, to the great joy of the people. He was, however, killed shortly after. Decius, who was worthy of empire, was

meantime amidst the cares of war engaged in the visionary project of restoring the long-departed public *virtue* which had once ennobled Rome. With this view he proposed to revive the office of censor, and the choice of the person being left to the senate, they unanimously voted it (Oct. 27), to P. Licinius Valerianus, as being the man most worthy of it. The decree was transmitted to the emperor, who was in Thrace; he read it aloud in a large assembly, and exhorted Valerian, who was present, to accept the proffered dignity. Valerian would fain excuse himself. We know not if the emperor was satisfied with his excuses, but from the turn which public affairs took the censorship was never exercised.

Decius was successful against the Goths, who offered to surrender their booty and prisoners, if allowed to repass the Danube: but the emperor, who was resolved to strike such a blow as would daunt the barbarians and make them henceforth respect the Roman arms, refused all terms. The Goths therefore gave him battle in a place where a part of their front was covered by a morass. The younger Decius was slain by an arrow in the beginning of the action; but the emperor crying out that the loss of one soldier did not signify, led on his troops. In the attempt to cross the morass they were pierced by the arrows of the enemy, or swallowed up in the mire, and the body of the emperor was never found.

C. Vibius Trebonianus Gallus.

A.U. 1005-1006. A.D. 252-253.

The senate, it is said, but more probably the army, conferred the vacant purple on Gallus, the governor of *Moesia*. He adopted Hostilianus, the remaining son of Decius, and gave him the title of Augustus; but this youth dying soon after of the plague, Gallus associated his own son Volusianus in the empire. Unable probably to resist the victorious Goths, Gallus agreed that they should depart with their booty and prisoners, and even consented to pay them annually a large sum of gold. He then set out for Rome, where he remained for the rest of his reign, ruling with great mildness and equity.

The Goths and their allies, heedless of treaties, again (253)

poured over the Danube; but Æmilianus, the governor of Moesia, gave them a signal defeat, and his victorious troops forthwith proclaimed him emperor. Without a moment's delay he put them in motion for Rome. Gallus advanced to engage him; the troops came in sight of each other at Interamna (*Termi*), and those of Gallus seeing themselves the weaker, and gained by the promises of Æmilianus, murdered the emperor and his son, and passed over to the side of the rebel.

C. Julius Æmilianus.

Æmilianus is said to have been a Moor by birth. Of his previous history nothing is known. He wrote to the senate to say that they should have the whole civil administration, and that he would be no more than their general, and that assembly readily acquiesced in his elevation.

But Valerian had been sent by Gallus to fetch the legions of Gaul and Germany to his aid; and these troops as soon as they heard of his death proclaimed their general emperor. He led them into Italy; and the troops of Æmilianus, which were encamped at Spoleto, fearing the strength and number of the advancing army, murdered their emperor to obviate a conflict. The reign of Æmilianus had not lasted four months.

P. Licinius Valerianus and P. Licinius Gallienus.

A.U. 1006-1013. A.D. 253-260.

Valerian is said to have been sixty years of age, when thus raised to the empire. Feeling the infirmities of age, or in imitation of the practice of so many preceding emperors, he associated with him his son Gallienus, a young man devoid neither of courage nor ability, but immoderately addicted to pleasure.

Had the Roman empire been in the condition in which it was left by Augustus, Valerian might have emulated that emperor, and have displayed his virtues and beneficence in promoting the happiness of his subjects. But a great change

had taken place in the condition of Rome; her legions no longer inspired their ancient terror; her northern and eastern provinces were exposed to the ravages of those who had formerly cowered before her eagles. Valerian could therefore only exhibit his wisdom in the selection of his generals; and it is to be observed that his choice never fell on an unworthy subject.

The enemies by whom the empire was assailed at this period were the Franks, the Alemans, the Goths and the Persians. As the scanty notices of these times do not enable us to arrange events chronologically, we will give a separate view of the wars with each of these peoples during the reigns of Valerian and his son.

We have already observed the proneness of the German tribes to form confederations. The Chaucans, Cheruskans, Cattans, and some adjoining states, had lately it would seem entered into one of these political unions under the name of Franks, *i. e.* Freeman. Their strength and number now causing uneasiness for Gaul, the young emperor Gallienus was sent to that country; but the chief military command was conferred on Postumius, a man of considerable ability. The arms of the legions were successful in various encounters; but they were finally unable to prevent the passage of an army of the Franks through Gaul, whence surmounting the barrier of the Pyrenees they poured down into the now unwarlike Spain. The rich city of Tarragona was taken and sacked; the whole country was devastated, and the Franks then seizing the vessels which they found in the ports, embarked to ravage Africa. We know not what was their ultimate fate; they were probably, however, destroyed in detail by the Roman troops and the provincials.

A portion of the great Suevian confederation had formed a new combination under the name of Alemans, *i. e.* Allmen, on account of the variety of tribes which composed it. Like the Suevians, their forces were chiefly composed of cavalry, with active footmen mingled with them*; and they always proved a formidable foe. While Gallienus was in Gaul a body of them entered Italy, penetrated as far as Ravenna, and their advanced troops came nearly within sight of Rome. The senate drew out the prætorian guards, and added to them a portion of the populace to oppose them; and the barbarians, finding themselves greatly outnumbered,

* The Hamippi of the Greeks. See Hist. of Greece, p. 211.

hastened to get beyond the Danube with their plunder. Gallienus it is said was so much alarmed at the spirit and energy shown by the senate on this occasion, that he issued an edict interdicting all military employments to the senators, and even prohibiting their access to the camps of the legions. It is added that the luxurious nobles viewed this indignity as a favour rather than an insult.

Gallienus is also said to have overcome a large army of Alemans in the vicinity of Milan*. He afterwards espoused Pipa, daughter of the king of the Marcomans (one of the confederates), to whom he gave a territory in Pannonia, as a means of averting the hostilities of the barbarians.

The Goths were now masters of the northern coast of the Euxine, and finding their attacks on the northern provinces generally repelled with vigour, they resolved to direct their efforts against more unwarlike districts. Collecting a quantity of the vessels used for navigating the Euxine, they embarked (258) and crossed that sea. They made their first attempt on the frontier-town of Pityus, which was long ably defended against them; but they at length succeeded in reducing it. They thence sailed to the wealthy city of Trebizond (*Trapezus*); and though it was defended by a numerous garrison, they effected an entrance during the night. The cowardly garrison fled without making any resistance; the inhabitants were massacred in great numbers; the booty and captives were immense, and the victors having ravaged the province of Pontus, embarked there on board of the ships which they found in the harbours, and returned to their settlement in the Tauric Chersonese.

The next expedition of the Goths was directed to the Bosphorus (261). They took and plundered Chalcedon and Nicomedia, Nicæa, Apamæa, Prusa and other cities of Bithynia. The accidental swelling of the little river Rhyndacus saved the town of Cyzicus from pillage.

The third expedition of the Goths was on a larger scale (262). Their fleet consisted of five hundred vessels of all sizes. They sailed along the Bosphorus and Propontis; took and plundered Cyzicus; passed the Hellespont, and entered the Ægean. They directed their course to the Piræus;

* Zonaras, xii. He says the Alemans were 300,000, the Romans only 10,000 strong.

Athens could offer no resistance; the Goths ravaged Greece with impunity, and advanced to the shores of the Adriatic. Gallienus roused himself from his pleasures and appeared in arms. A Herulan chief with his men was induced to enter the Roman service; the Goths, weakened by this defection, broke up; a part forced their way to the Danube overland; the rest embarked, and pillaging and burning the temple of Diana at Ephesus on their way, returned to the Euxine.

Sapor of Persia had been long engaged in war with Chosroës king of Armenia, a prince of the house of Arsaces. Unable to reduce the brave Armenian, he caused him to be assassinated; and Armenia then received the Persian yoke. Elated with his success, Sapor invaded the Roman territory, took Nisibis and Carrhæ, and spread his ravages over Mesopotamia. Valerian, alarmed for the safety of the Eastern provinces, proceeded thither in person (259). The events of the war which ensued have not reached us. All that we know with certainty is, that Valerian was finally defeated and made a captive (260). The circumstances of his capture were somewhat similar to those of the taking of Crassus. His army, by ignorance or treachery, got into a position where neither discipline nor courage could avail, being without supplies and suffering from disease. The soldiers clamoured for a capitulation; Sapor detained the deputies that were sent to him, and led his troops up to the camp; and Valerian was obliged to consent to a conference, at which he was made a prisoner.

Valerian ended his days a captive in Persia. We are told that Sapor treated him with every kind of indignity; that he led him about in chains clad in his imperial purple; that when the haughty Persian would mount his horse, the captive emperor was made to go on his hands and knees to serve as his horse-block; and that when death at length released him from his sufferings, his skin was stripped off, tanned and stuffed, and placed in one of the most celebrated temples of Persia. The sufferings of Valerian are, however, probably of the same kind with the tortures of Regulus and the iron cage of Bajazet; gross exaggerations of some degree of ill-treatment or of necessary precaution.

P. Licinius Gallienus.

A.U. 1013-1021. A.D. 260-268.

The captivity of Valerian was lamented by all but his son, who felt himself relieved by it from the restraint imposed on him by his father's virtue. He even affected to act the philosopher on the occasion, saying in imitation of Xenophon, "I knew that my father was mortal;" but he never made any attempt to procure his liberty, and he abandoned himself without restraint to sensual indulgence.

The reign of Gallienus is termed the Time of the Thirty Tyrants. This word seems to have recovered its ancient Grecian sense, and to have merely signified prince, or rather usurper, that is one who claims the supreme power already held by another. The tyrants of this time were in general men of excellent character, who had been placed in the command of armies by Valerian, and were invested with the purple by their soldiers often against their will. The number of these usurpers who rose and fell in succession did not exceed eighteen or nineteen, but some very fanciful analogy led to a comparison of them with the Thirty of Athens, and in the Augustan History an effort is made by including women and children to raise them to that number.

The East, Illyricum, Gaul, Greece and Egypt were the places in which these tyrants appeared. We will notice them in order.

After the defeat of Valerian, Sapor conferred the title of emperor on a person named Cyriades, the son of a citizen of Antioch. This vassal forthwith conducted the Persian troops to the pillage of his native city, and so rapid and so secret was their march that they surprised the Antiochenes while engaged at the theatre. The massacre and devastation usual in the East ensued. The Persian monarch then poured his troops into Cilicia, took and plundered Tarsus and other towns; then crossing Mount Taurus, he laid siege to Cæsarea in Cappadocia, a city with 400,000 inhabitants. It was stoutly defended for some time, but treachery at length delivered it into the hands of the Persians, and massacre and pillage followed. Sapor now spread his ravages on all sides; but the Roman troops having rallied under the command of Ser. Anicius Ballista, who had been prætorian prefect, checked his ca-

reer, and as he was retiring toward his own states, he found himself assailed by an unexpected enemy.

Soon after the defeat and capture of Valerian, a train of camels laden with presents entered the camp of Sapor. They were accompanied by a letter from Odenatus, a wealthy citizen of Palmyra (the ancient Tadmor), containing an assurance that he had never acted against the Persians. Sapor, enraged at such insolence (as he deemed it), tore the letter, flung the gifts into the river, and declared that he would exterminate the insolent writer and his family unless he came before his throne with his hands bound behind his back. Odenatus at once resolved to join the Romans; he collected a force chiefly composed of the Bedoweens or Arabs of the Desert, over whom he had great influence. He hovered about the Persian army, and attacking it at the passage of the Euphrates, carried off much treasure, and some of the women of the Great King, who was forced to seek safety in a precipitate retreat. Odenatus made himself master of all Mesopotamia, and he even passed the Tigris and made an attempt on Ctesiphon (261). Gallienus gave him the title of his general of the East, and Odenatus himself took soon after that of king of Palmyra.

The Roman troops in the East meantime being resolved not to submit to Gallienus, were deliberating on whom they would bestow the purple. Acting under the advice of Ballista, they fixed on the prætorian prefect, M. Fulvius Macrianus, a man of great military talents, and what was perhaps of more importance in their eyes, extremely wealthy. Macrianus conferred the office of prætorian prefect on Ballista, and leaving with him his younger son and a part of the army to defend the East, he put himself at the head of 45,000 men, and taking with him his elder son, set out for Europe (262). On the borders of Illyricum he was encountered by M. Acilius Aureolus the governor (or as some say the tyrant) of that province, and in the battle which ensued himself and his son were slain, and his troops surrendered. After the death of Macrianus, Ballista assumed the purple, but he was slain by order of Odenatus, whom Gallienus (264), with the full consent of the senate and people of Rome, had made his associate in the empire, giving him the titles of Cæsar, Augustus, and all the other tokens of sovereignty.

Tib. Cestius Æmilianus, who commanded in Egypt, assumed the purple in that province (262), in consequence it is said of

a sedition in the most turbulent city of Alexandria; but he was defeated the following year, taken prisoner, and sent to Gallienus, who caused him to be strangled.

It was in Gaul that the usurpers had most success. As soon as Gallienus left that country (260), the general M. Cassius Latienus Postumus was proclaimed emperor, and his authority appears to have been acknowledged in both Spain and Britain. He is described as a man of most noble and upright character; he administered justice impartially, and he defended the frontier against the Germans with valour and success. Possessed of the affections of the people, he easily maintained himself against all the efforts of Gallienus; but he was slain at last (267) in a mutiny of his own soldiers, to whom he had refused the plunder of the city of Mentz, in which a rival emperor had appeared. Postumus had associated with himself in the empire Victorinus, the son of a lady named Aurelia Victoria, who was called the Mother of the Camp, and who had such influence with the troops, we know not how acquired, but probably by her wealth, as to be able to give the purple to whom she pleased. Victorinus being slain by a man whose wife he had violated, a simple armourer, named Marius, wore the purple for two days, at the end of which he was murdered; and Victoria then caused a senator named P. Pivesus Tetricus to be proclaimed emperor, who maintained his power for some years.

At the time when Macrianus claimed the empire, P. Valerius Valens, the governor of Greece, finding that that usurper, who was resolved on his destruction, had sent L. Calpurnius Piso against him, assumed the purple in his own defence. Piso being forced to retire into Thessaly, caused himself to be proclaimed emperor there; but few joined him, and he was slain by a party of soldiers sent against him by Valens, who was himself shortly after put to death by his own troops. Both Valens and Piso were men of high character, especially the latter, to whom the senate decreed divine honours, and respecting whom Valens himself said, that "he would not be able to account to the gods below, for having ordered Piso, though his enemy, to be slain, a man whose like the Roman republic did not then possess."

C. Annius Trebellianus declared himself independent in Isauria, and T. Cornelius Celsus was proclaimed emperor in Africa; but both speedily perished (265). Among the cala-

mities of this reign was an insurrection of the slaves in Sicily, similar to those in the time of the republic.

While his empire was thus torn asunder, Gallienus thought only of indulgence, and the loss of a province only gave him occasion for a joke. When Egypt revolted, "Well," said he, "cannot we do without Egyptian linen?" So when Gaul was lost, he asked if the republic could not be secure without clokes from Arras. He was content to retain Italy, satisfied with a nominal sovereignty over the rest of the empire; and whenever this seat of dominion was menaced, he exhibited in its defence the vigour and personal courage which he really possessed.

Gaul and Illyricum were the quarters from which Italy had most to apprehend: Gallienus therefore headed his troops against Postumus, and when D. Lælius Ingenuus revolted in Pannonia, he marched against him, defeated and slew him, and made the most cruel use of his victory to deter others (260). Q. Nonius Regillianus, who afterwards revolted in the same country, was slain by his own soldiers (263); but when Aureolus was induced to assume the purple (268) the Illyrian legions advanced and made themselves masters of Milan. Gallienus shaking off sloth quickly appeared at the head of his troops; the hostile armies encountered on the banks of the Adda, and Aureolus was defeated, wounded, and forced to shut himself up in Milan. During the siege a conspiracy was formed against the emperor by some of the principal officers of his army, and one night as he was sitting at table a report was spread that Aureolus had made a sally. Gallienus instantly threw himself on horseback to hasten to the point of danger, and in the dark he received a mortal wound from an unknown hand.

CHAPTER VII.*

CLAUDIUS. AURELIAN. TACITUS. PROBUS. CARUS. CARINUS
AND NUMERIAN.

A.U. 1021-1038. A.D. 268-285.

Claudius.—Invasions of the Goths.—Aurelian.—Alemannic War.—War against Zenobia.—Tetricus.—Death of Aurelian.—Tacitus.—His Death.—Probus.—His Military Successes.—His Death.—Carus.—Persian War.—His Death.—Carinus and Numerian.—Death of Numerian.—Election of Diocletian.—Battle of Margus.

We now enter on a series of emperors of a new order. Born nearly all in humble stations, and natives of the province of Illyricum, they rose by merit through the gradations of military service, attained the empire in general without crime, maintained its dignity, and checked or punished the inroads of the barbarians. This series commences with the death of Gallienus and terminates with that of Licinius, embracing a period of somewhat more than half a century, and marked, as we shall find, by most important changes in the Roman empire.

M. Aurelius Claudius.

A.U. 1021-1023. A.D. 268-270.

The murmurs of the soldiers on the death of Gallienus were easily stilled by the promise of a donative of twenty pieces of gold a man. To justify themselves in the eyes of the world, the conspirators resolved to bestow the empire on one who should form an advantageous contrast to its late unworthy possessor, and they fixed on M. Aurelius Claudius, who commanded a division of the army at Pavia. The soldiers, the senate and the people alike approved their choice, and Claudius assumed the purple with universal approbation.

This excellent man, in whose praise writers of all parties agreed, was a native of Illyricum, born apparently in humble circumstances. His merit raised him through the inferior gradations of the army; he attracted the notice of the emperor Decius, and the discerning Valerian made him general† of the Illyrian frontier, with an assurance of the consulate.

* Authorities: Zosimus, the Augustan History, and Epitomators.

† The term now in use for general was *Dux*, whence our *duke*.

Aureolus was soon obliged to surrender, and he was put to death by the soldiers. An army of Alemans, coming perhaps to his aid, was then, it is said, defeated by Claudius near Verona. After his victory the emperor proceeded to Rome, where during the remainder of the year he devoted his time and thoughts to the reformation of abuses in the state. Among other just and prudent regulations, he directed that the properties confiscated by Gallienus should be restored to their original owners. A woman, it is said, came on this occasion to the emperor and claimed her land, which she said had been given to Claudius, the commander of the cavalry. This officer was the emperor himself, and he replied that the emperor Claudius must restore what he took when he was a private man, and under less obligation to obey the laws*.

The following year (269) the Goths and their allies embarked, we are told, to the number of 320,000 warriors, with their wives, children, and slaves, in two, or as some say six thousand vessels, and directed their course to the Bosphorus. In passing that narrow channel the number of their vessels and the rapidity of the current caused them to suffer considerable loss. Their attempts on Byzantium and Cyzicus having failed, they proceeded along the northern coast of the Ægæan, and laid siege to the cities of Cassandria and Thessalonica. While thus engaged they learned that the emperor was on his march to oppose them, and breaking up they advanced into the interior, wasting and plundering the country on their way. Near the town of Naïssus, in Dardania, they encountered the Roman legions. The battle was long and bloody, and the Romans were at one time on the verge of defeat; but the skill of Claudius turned the beam, and the Goths were finally routed with a loss of 50,000 men. During the remainder of the year numerous desultory actions occurred, in which the Goths sustained great losses; and being finally hemmed in on all sides by the Roman troops, they were forced to seek refuge in Mount Hæmus, and pass the winter amidst its snows. Famine and pestilence alike preyed on them, and when on the return of spring (270) the emperor took the field against them, they were obliged to surrender at discretion. A portion of their youth were enrolled in the imperial troops; vast numbers both of men and women were reduced to slavery; on some lands were bestowed in the provinces; few returned to their seats on the Euxine.

* Zonaras, p. 239.

The pestilence which had afflicted the Goths proved also fatal to the emperor. He was attacked and carried off by it at Sirmium in the 57th year of his age. In the presence of his principal officers he named, it is said, Aurelian, one of his generals, as the fittest person to succeed him ; but his brother Quintilius, when he heard of his death, assumed the purple at Aquileia, and was acknowledged by the senate. Hearing, however, that Aurelian was on his march against him, he gave up all hopes of success, and opening his veins died after a reign of seventeen days.

L. Domitius Aurelianus.

A.U. 1023-1028. A.D. 270-275.

Aurelian, like his able predecessor, was a man of humble birth. His father is said to have been a small farmer, and his mother a priestess of the sun, in a village near Sirmium. He entered the army as a common soldier, and rose through the successive gradations of the service to the rank of general of a frontier. He was adopted in the presence of Valerian (some said at his request) by Ulpius Crinitus, a senator of the same family with the emperor Trajan, who gave him his daughter in marriage, and Valerian bestowed on him the office of consul. In the Gothic war Claudius had committed to him the command of the cavalry.

Immediately on his election Aurelian hastened to Rome, whence he was speedily recalled to Pannonia by the intelligence of an irruption of the Goths. A great battle was fought, which was terminated by night without any decisive advantage on either side. Next day the Goths retired over the river and sent proposals for peace, which was cheerfully accorded, and for many years no hostilities of any account occurred between the Goths and Romans. But while Aurelian was thus occupied in Pannonia, the Alemans, with a force of 40,000 horse and 80,000 foot, had passed the Alps and spread their ravages to the Po. Instead of following them into Italy, Aurelian, learning that they were on their return home with their booty, marched along the Danube to intercept their retreat, and attacking them unawares, he reduced them to such straits that they sent to sue for peace. The emperor received the envoys at the head of his legions, surrounded by his principal officers. After a

silence of some moments they spoke by their interpreter, saying that it was the desire of peace and not the fear of war that had brought them thither. They reminded him of the uncertainty of war, and enlarged on the number of their forces. As a condition of peace they required the usual presents, and the same annual payments in silver and gold that they had had before the war. Aurelian replied in a long speech, the sum of which was that nothing short of unconditional surrender would be accepted. The envoys returning to their countrymen reported the ill-success of their embassy, and forthwith the army turned back and re-entered Italy. Aurelian followed and came up with them at Placentia. The Alemans, who had stationed themselves in the woods, fell suddenly on the legions in the dusk of the evening, and nothing but the firmness and skill of the emperor saved the Romans from a total overthrow. A second battle was fought near Fano in Umbria, on the spot where Hannibal's brother Hasdrubal had been defeated and slain five hundred years before. The Alemans were totally routed, and a concluding victory at Pavia delivered Italy from their ravages. Aurelian pursued the barbarians beyond the Alps, and then turned to Pannonia, which the Vandals had invaded. He engaged and defeated them (271). They sent to sue for peace, and he referred the matter to his soldiers, who loudly expressed their desire for an accommodation. The Vandals gave the children of their two kings and of their principal nobles for hostages, and Aurelian took two thousand of them into his service.

There had been some seditions at Rome during the time of the Alemanic war, and Aurelian on his return to the capital acted with great severity, and even cruelty, in punishing those engaged in them. He is accused of having put to death senators of high rank on the slightest evidence, and for the most trifling offences. Aware, too, that neither Alps nor Apennines could now check the barbarians, he resolved to put Rome into a posture to stand a siege, and he commenced the erection of massive walls around it, which, when completed by his successors, formed a circuit of eleven miles*, and yielded a striking proof of the declining strength of the empire.

Aurelian, victorious against the barbarians, had still two rivals to subdue before he could be regarded as perfect master of the empire. Tetricus was acknowledged in Gaul, Spain

* *Quinquaginta prope millia*, sc. *pedum*. Vopisc. Aur. 39. It is thus that Piale and Becker correctly supply the ellipse; as that is about the extent of the present walls, which are in the main those of Aurelian.

and Britain; Zenobia, the widow of Odenatus, ruled the East. It is uncertain against which he first turned his arms, but as the greater number of writers give the priority to the Syrian war, we will here follow their example.

Odenatus and his eldest son Herod were treacherously slain by his nephew Mæonius; but Zenobia, the widow of the murdered prince, speedily punished the traitor, and then held the government in the name of her remaining sons. This extraordinary woman claimed a descent from the Ptolemies of Egypt. In her person she displayed the beauty of the East, being of a clear dark complexion, with pearly white teeth and brilliant black eyes. Her voice was strong and harmonious; she spoke the Greek, Syrian, and Egyptian languages, and understood the Latin. She was fond of study, but at the same time she loved vigorous exercises; and she accompanied her husband to the chase of the lion, the panther, and the other wild beasts of the wood and desert, and by her counsels and her vigour of mind she greatly contributed to his success in war. To these manly qualities was united a chastity rarely to be found in the East. Viewing the union of the sexes as the appointed means of continuing the species, Zenobia would admit the embraces of her husband only in order to have offspring. She was temperate and sober, yet when needful she could quaff wine with her generals, and even vanquish in the combats of the table the wine-loving Persians and Armenians. As a sovereign Zenobia was severe or clement as the occasion required; she was frugal of her treasure beyond what was ordinary with a woman, but when her affairs called for liberality no one dispensed them more freely.

After the death of Odenatus Zenobia styled her three sons Augusti, but she held the government in her own hands; she bore the title of Queen of the East, wore royal robes and the diadem, caused herself to be adored in the oriental fashion, and put the years of her reign on her coins. She defeated an army sent against her by Gallienus; she made herself mistress of Egypt, and her rule extended northwards as far as the confines of Bithynia.

Aurelian on passing over to Asia reduced to order the province of Bithynia. The city of Tyana in Cappadocia resisted him, but the treachery of one of its inhabitants put it into his hands. He pardoned the people, and he abandoned the traitor to the just indignation of the soldiers. On the banks of the Orontes he encountered the troops of the Queen of the East.

A cavalry action ensued, and the Palmyrenians being greatly superior in that arm, Aurelian employed the stratagem of making his cavalry feign a flight, and then turn and attack the pursuing enemies when wearied and exhausted with the weight of their heavy armour. The defeated Palmyrenians retired to Antioch, which they quitted in the night, and next day it opened its gates to Aurelian. He advanced then with little opposition to Emesa, where he found the Palmyrenian army, 70,000 strong, encamped in the plain before the city. Zenobia herself was present, but the command was entrusted to her general, Zabdas. In the engagement, the Roman horse, unable to withstand the ponderous charge of the steel-clad Palmyrenians, turned and fled. While the Palmyrenian cavalry was engaged in the pursuit, their light infantry, being left unprotected, offered little resistance to the legions, and a total rout ensued. Zenobia, seeing the battle lost, and knowing that the people of Emesa favoured the Romans, abandoned that city, and retired and shut herself up in Palmyra, her capital.

The city of Tadmor, or Palmyra, as it was named by the Greeks, seems to have been from the earliest times a place of importance in the trade between the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean sea, being situated in an oasis of the desert, abounding in herbage, trees, and springs, and lying within sixty miles of the Euphrates, and somewhat more than three times that distance of the coast of Syria. Solomon, king of Israel, had made himself master of this important post, and fortified it. Its advantages being the gift of nature and not of man, it continued to flourish under all the surrounding vicissitudes of empire. In the time of Trajan it became a Roman colony, and it was adorned with those stately public edifices whose ruins command the admiration of modern Europe.

In their march over the desert the Roman troops were harassed by the attacks of the Bedoween Arabs. They found the city of Palmyra strongly fortified and abundantly supplied with the means of defence. When the siege had lasted for some time, Aurelian wrote, offering advantageous terms to the queen and the people; but fully convinced that famine would soon prey on the Roman army, and that the Persians and Arabs would hasten to her relief, Zenobia returned a haughty and insulting reply. The expected succours, however, did not arrive; convoys of provisions entered the Roman camp; and Probus, whom Aurelian had detached for the reduction of Egypt, having accomplished his commission, brought his

troops to join the main army. Want began to be felt within the walls of Palmyra, and Zenobia, finding that the city must surrender, resolved to fly to the Persians and seek by their aid to continue the war. Mounting one of the fleetest dromedaries, she left the city, and had reached the Euphrates, and even entered the boat which was to convey her across, when the party of light horse sent in pursuit came up and seized her. When brought before the emperor and demanded why she had dared to insult the emperors of Rome, she replied that she regarded *him* as such, as *he* had conquered; but that she never could esteem Gallienus, Aureolus, and such persons to be emperors. This prudent answer won her favour, and Aurelian treated her with respect. The city soon surrendered, and the emperor led his army back to Emesa, where he set up his tribunal, and had Zenobia and her ministers and friends brought to trial. The soldiers were clamorous for the death of the queen, but the emperor was resolved to reserve her to grace his triumph; and it is added, that she belied the greatness of her character by weakly throwing all the blame on her ministers. Of these several were executed, among whom was the celebrated Longinus, the queen's secretary. He died with the equanimity of a philosopher, comforting his companions in misfortune.

Aurelian had passed the Bosphorus on his return to Rome when intelligence reached him that the Palmyrenians had risen on and massacred the small garrison he had left in their city. He instantly retraced his steps, arrived at Antioch before it was known that he had set out, hastened to Palmyra, took the city, and massacred men, women and children, citizens and peasants, without distinction. As he was on his way back to Europe, news came that Egypt had revolted and made a wealthy merchant named Firmus emperor, and that the export of corn to Rome had been stopped. The indefatigable Aurelian soon appeared on the banks of the Nile, defeated the usurper, and took and put him to death.

The overthrow of Tetricus (whether it preceded or followed these events) left Aurelian without a rival. Tetricus, it is said, was so wearied with the state of thralldom in which he was held by his mutinous troops, that he secretly wrote to Aurelian to come to his deliverance. When the emperor entered Gaul, Tetricus found it necessary to affect the alacrity of one determined to conquer or die; but when the armies encountered on the plains of Chalons, he betrayed his troops, and deserted in the very commencement of the battle. His

legions fought, notwithstanding, with desperation, and perished nearly to a man.

Victorious over all his rivals and all the enemies of Rome, Aurelian celebrated a triumph with unusual magnificence. Wild beasts of various kinds, troops of gladiators, and bands of captives of many nations opened the procession. Tetricus and his son walked, clad in the Gallic habit; Zenobia also moved on foot covered with jewels and bound with golden chains, which were borne up by slaves. The splendid cars of Odenatus and Zenobia, and one the gift of the Persian king to the emperor, preceded the chariot drawn by four stags, once the car of a Gothic king, in which Aurelian himself rode. The senate, the people, the army, horse and foot, succeeded; and it was late in the day when the monarch reached the Capitol.

The view of a Roman senator led in triumph in the person of Tetricus (an act of which there was no example), cast a gloom over the minds of the senators. The insult, if intended for such, ended however with the procession. Aurelian made him governor of the southern part of Italy, and honoured him with his friendship. He also bestowed on the Palmyrenian queen an estate at Tibur, where she lived many years, and her daughters matched into some of the noblest Roman families.

The improvement of the city by useful public works, the establishment of daily distributions of bread and pork to the people, and the burning of all accounts of moneys due to the treasury, were measures calculated to gain Aurelian the popular favour. But a reformation of the coinage became the cause or pretext of an insurrection, the quelling of which cost him the lives of seven thousand of his veteran soldiers. Enveloped as the whole affair is in obscurity, the senators must have been implicated in it, for Aurelian's vengeance fell heavily on the whole body of the nobility. Numbers of them were cast into prison, and several were executed.

Aurelian quitted Rome once more for the East, in order to carry on war against the Persians. On the road in Thrace, having detected his private secretary Mnestheus in some act of extortion, he menaced him with his anger. Aware that he never threatened in vain, Mnestheus saw that himself or the emperor must die; he, therefore, imitating Aurelian's writing, drew up a list containing his own name and those of the principal officers of the army as marked out for death. He showed

this bloody list to those who were named in it, advising them to anticipate the emperor's cruelty. Without further inquiry they resolved on his murder, and falling on him between Byzantium and Heraclea, they despatched him with their swords.

M. Claudius Tacitus.

A.U. 1028-1029. A.D. 275-276.

After the death of the emperor Aurelian a scene without example presented itself,—an amicable strife between the senate and the army, each wishing the other to appoint an emperor, and the empire without a head and without a tumult for the greater part of a year. It originated in the following manner.

The assassins of Aurelian speedily discovered their error, and Mnesotheus expiated his treason with his life. The soldiers, who lamented the emperor, would not raise to his place any of those concerned in his death, however innocently, and they wrote to the senate requesting them to appoint his successor. The senate, though gratified by the deference shown to them by the army, deemed it prudent to decline the invidious honour. The legions again pressed them, and eight months passed away in the friendly contest. At length (Sept. 28.) the consul assembled the senate and laying before them the perilous condition of the empire, called on Tacitus the First of the Senate to give his opinion. But ere he could speak he was saluted emperor and Augustus from all parts of the house, and after having in vain represented his unfitness for the office on account of his advanced age, he was obliged to yield to their wishes and accept the purple. The prætorian guards cheerfully acquiesced in the choice of the senate; and when Tacitus proceeded to the camp in Thrace, the soldiers, true to their engagement, submitted willingly to his authority.

Tacitus was now seventy-five years old. He was one of those men who were perhaps less rare at Rome than we generally imagine, who in the possession of a splendid fortune spent a life dignified by the honours of the state in the cultivation of philosophy and elegant literature. He claimed a descent from the historian of his name, whose works formed his constant study, and after his accession to the empire he

directed that ten copies of them should be annually made and placed in the public libraries.

Viewing himself only as the minister of the laws and the senate, Tacitus sought to raise that body to its former consideration, by restoring the privileges of which it had been deprived. Once more it began to appoint magistrates, to hear appeals, and to give validity to the imperial edicts. But this was merely a glimpse of sunshine irradiating the decline of its greatness. In history there is no return, and the real power of the once mighty Roman senate had departed for ever.

Aurelian had engaged a body of the Alans, a Sarmatian tribe who dwelt about lake Mæotis, for the war against Persia. On the death of that emperor, and the suspension of the war, they ravaged the provinces south of the Euxine to indemnify themselves for their disappointment. Tacitus on taking the command of the army offered to make good to them the engagements contracted by his predecessor. A good number of them accepted the terms and retired, and he led the legions against the remainder, and speedily reduced them. As these military operations fell in the winter, the emperor's constitution, enervated by age and the relaxing clime of southern Italy, proved unequal to them. His mind was also harassed by the factions which broke out in the camp, and even reached his tent, and he sank under mental and corporeal suffering at Tyana on the 22nd of April, 276, after a brief reign of six months and twenty days.

M. Aurelius Probus.

A.U. 1029-1035. A.D. 276-282.

On the death of Tacitus his brother Florianus claimed the empire as if fallen to him by inheritance, and the legions yielded him their obedience; but the army of the East obliged their general, Probus, to assume the purple, and a civil war commenced. The constitution of the European troops soon, however, began to give way under the heat or the sun of Asia; sickness spread among them, desertions became numerous, and when at Tarsus in Cilicia the army of Probus came to give them battle, they averted the contest by proclaiming Probus, and putting their emperor to death after a reign of less than three months.

Probus was another of those Illyrians, who, born in a humble station, attained the empire by their merit, and honoured it by their virtues. He entered the army young, and speedily became distinguished for his courage and his probity. His merit did not escape the discerning eye of Valerian, who made him a tribune, though under the usual age; gave him the command of a body of auxiliary troops, and recommended him strongly to Gallienus, by whom and by the succeeding emperors he was greatly esteemed, and trusted with important commands. Aurelian rated him very highly, and is even thought to have destined him for his successor.

After the death of Florianus Probus wrote to the senate, apologising for having accepted the empire from the hands of the soldiery, but assuring them that he would submit himself to their pleasure. A decree was unanimously passed investing him with all the imperial titles and powers. In return Probus continued to the senate the right of hearing appeals, appointing magistrates, and of giving force to his edicts by their decrees.

Tacitus had punished severely some of those concerned in the murder of Aurelian; Probus sought out and punished the remainder, but with less rigour. He exhibited no enmity toward those who had supported Florianus.

The Germans had taken advantage of the interregnum which succeeded the death of Aurelian to make a formidable irruption into Gaul, where they made themselves masters of not less than seventy cities, and were in possession of nearly the whole of the country. Probus, however, as soon as his affairs permitted (277), entered Gaul at the head of a numerous and well-appointed army. He gave the Germans several defeats, and forced them to repass the Rhine with a loss, it is said, of 400,000 men. He pursued them over that river, and nine of their kings were obliged to come in person to sue for peace. The terms which the emperor imposed were the restoration of all their booty, the annual delivery of a large quantity of corn and cattle, and 16,000 men to recruit the Roman armies. These Probus distributed in parties of fifty and sixty throughout the legions, for it was his wise maxim that the aid derived from the barbarians should be felt, not seen. He also placed colonies of the Germans and other tribes in Britain, and some of the other provinces. He had further, it is said, conceived the idea of making the conquered Germans renounce the use of arms and trust for their defence to those

of the Romans ; but on considering the number of troops it would require he gave it up, contenting himself with making them retire behind the Necker and Elbe, with building forts and towns in the country between these rivers and the Rhine, and running a wall two hundred miles in length from the Rhine to the Danube as a defence to Italy and the provinces against the Alemans.

After the conquest of the Germans the emperor led his troops into Rætia and Illyria, where the terror of his name and his arms daunted the Goths and Sarmatians, and gave security to the provinces. He then (279) passed over to Asia, while he subdued the brigands of Isauria, and expelled them from their fastnesses in the mountains, in which he settled some of his veterans, under the condition that they should send their sons when eighteen years of age to the army, in order that they might not be induced by the natural advantages of the country to take to a life of freebooting, and prove as dangerous as their predecessors. Proceeding through Syria he entered Egypt and reduced the people named Blemmyans *, who had taken the cities of Coptos and Ptolemais. He concluded a peace with the king of Persia, and on his return through Thrace he bestowed lands on a body of 200,000 Bastarnians, and on some of the Gepidans, Vandals, and other tribes. He triumphed for the Germans and Blemmyans on his return to Rome.

A prince so just and upright, and at the same time so warlike as Probus, might have been expected to have no competitors for empire ; yet even he had to take the field against rival emperors. The first of these was Saturninus, whom he himself had made general of the East, a man of both talent and virtue, and for whom he had a most cordial esteem. But the light-minded and turbulent people of Alexandria, on occasion of his entry into their city, saluted him Augustus ; and though he rejected the title and retired to Palestine, he yet, not reflecting on the generous nature of Probus, deemed that he could no longer live in a private station. He therefore assumed the purple, saying with tears to his friends that the republic had lost a useful man, and that his own ruin and that of many others was inevitable. Probus tried in vain to induce him to trust to his clemency. A part of his troops joined those sent against him by the emperor ; he was besieged in the castle of Apamæa, and taken and slain.

After the defeat of Saturninus, two officers, named Proculus

* This people inhabited the mountains between Upper Egypt and the Red Sea.

and Bonosus, assumed the purple in Germany. They were both men of ability, and the emperor found it necessary to take the field against them in person. Proculus being defeated fled for succour to the Franks, by whom he was betrayed, and he fell in battle against the imperial troops. Bonosus held out for some time, but having received a decisive overthrow he hanged himself. As he had been remarkable for his drinking powers, one who saw him hanging cried, "There hangs a jar, not a man." Probus treated the families of both with great humanity.

Probus, though far less cruel, was as rigid a maintainer of discipline in the army as Aurelian had been. His mode was to keep the legions constantly employed, and thus to obviate the ill effects of idleness. When he commanded in Egypt he employed his troops in draining marshes, improving the course of the Nile, and raising public edifices. In Gaul and Pannonia he occupied them in forming vineyards. His maxim was that a soldier should not eat his food idly, and he even used to express his hopes that the time would come when the republic would have no further need of soldiers. This language naturally produced a good deal of discontent, and when on his march against the Persians, who had broken the peace (282), he halted at his native town of Sirmium and set the soldiers at work to cut a canal to drain the marshes which incommoded it, they broke out into an open mutiny. Probus fled for safety to an iron tower, whence he was in the habit of surveying the progress of the works, but the furious soldiers forced the tower and seized and murdered him. They then lamented him, and gave his remains an honourable sepulture.

M. Aurelius Carus.

A.U. 1035-1036. A.D. 282-283.

Notwithstanding their grief and repentance for the murder of Probus, the soldiers did not part with their power of choosing an emperor. They conferred the purple on Carus, the prætorian prefect, and the senate was as usual obliged to acquiesce in their decision.

Carus was about sixty years of age. The place of his birth is uncertain, but probability is in favour of Illyricum. He

stood high in the estimation of the late discerning emperor, and he was undoubtedly a man of considerable ability.

The first care of the new emperor was to punish the authors of the death of his predecessor. He then raised his two sons, Carinus and Numerian (who were both grown up), to the dignity of Cæsars; and as the barbarians after the death of Probus had passed the Rhine and the Lower Danube, he sent Carinus into Gaul, directing him when he had repelled the invaders to fix his residence at Rome and govern there during his absence. He himself, taking Numerian with him, marched against the Sarmatians (283), whom he defeated with a loss of 16,000 slain and 20,000 prisoners; and having thus secured the Illyrian frontier, he led his army over to Asia for the Persian war.

When Carus passed the Euphrates, the Persian monarch, Varanes (*Bahram*) II., though an able and a valiant prince, being engaged in a civil war, could not collect a force sufficient to oppose to the Romans: he therefore sent to propose terms of peace. It was evening when the ambassadors arrived at the Roman camp. Carus was at the time seated on the grass eating his supper, which consisted of a bowl of cold boiled peas and some pieces of salt pork, with a purple woollen robe thrown over his shoulders. He desired them to be brought to him, and when they came he told them that if their master did not submit he would in a month's time make Persia as bare of trees and standing corn as his own head was of hair; and, suiting the action to the word, he pulled off the cap which he wore and displayed his head totally devoid of hair. He invited them, if hungry, to share his meal; if not, he bade them depart. They withdrew in terror, and Carus forthwith took the field and recovered the whole of Mesopotamia; he defeated the troops sent against him, and took the cities of Seleucia and Ctesiphon. He was advancing into the interior of Persia, when one day as the army was encamped near the Tigris there came on a furious thunder-storm, and immediately after a most awful clap, a cry was raised that the emperor was dead. His tent was found to be in flames, but whether his death was caused by lightning or by treachery remained uncertain.

M. Aurelius Carinus and M. Aurelius Numerianus.

A.U. 1036-1038. A.D. 283-285.

The death of Carus appears to have occurred about the end of the year 283. The authority of his sons was readily acknowledged, and Numerian, apprehensive, as it might seem, of the designs of his brother, gave up the Persian war and set out on his return to Europe.

Numerian was a prince of an amiable disposition, a lover and cultivator of literature, a poet, it is said, of no mean order, and an eloquent declaimer. He was married to the daughter of Arrius Aper, to whom Carus had given the important post of prætorian prefect; and as on account of a weakness in his eyes Numerian was obliged to remain shut up in his tent or to travel in a close litter, all public business was transacted in his name by his father-in-law. The army had reached the shores of the Bosphorus when a report was spread that the emperor, whom they had not seen for some time, had ceased to exist. The soldiers broke into the imperial tent, and there found only the corpse of Numerian. The concealment of his death and other circumstances caused suspicion to fall on Aper. He was seized and laid in chains; a general assembly of the army was held while the generals and tribunes sat in council to select a successor to Numerian. Their choice fell on Diocletian, the commander of the body-guard. The soldiers testified their approbation. Diocletian having ascended the tribunal made a solemn protestation of his own innocence, and then caused Aper to be led before him. "This man," said he, when he appeared, "is the murderer of Numerian," and without giving him a moment's time for defence, he plunged his sword into his bosom.

It may cause some surprise that the army should have proceeded to the election of an emperor while Carinus was yet living. We know not what intrigues there may have been on the part of Diocletian, but the vices of that prince are said to have been such as would fully justify his exclusion. His conduct at Rome had been so vicious, and he put such unworthy persons into office even during his father's lifetime, that Carus cried he was no son of his, and proposed to substitute for him in the empire Constantius, the governor of Dalmatia. When the death of his father had removed all restraint, he gave free course to his vicious inclinations, display-

ing the luxury of an *Elegabalus* and the cruelty of a *Domitian*. The news, however, of the death of his brother, and the elevation of *Diocletian*, roused him to energy, and he placed himself at the head of his troops. After a succession of engagements the decisive conflict took place (May, 285) on the plain of *Margus*, near the *Danube* in *Mœsia*. *Carinus* was betrayed or deserted by his own troops, and he was slain by a tribune whose wife he had seduced.

During the long period now elapsed the aspect of the Roman world remained nearly as we have already described it. The absence of a respectable middle class of society, abject poverty and enormous wealth standing in striking contrast in the provinces as well as in Italy, unbridled luxury and the want of all noble and generous feeling, everywhere met the view. At the same time foreign trade, of which luxury is the great promoter, was in a most flourishing state, and immense fortunes were acquired by traffic. The silks, the spices, and the precious stones and pearls of India, and the amber of the Baltic reached Rome in abundance, and were purchased by its luxurious nobles and their ladies at enormous prices.

The history of this period has noticed two instances which may give us some idea of the wealth of individuals in those days: the one is that of a Roman nobleman, the emperor *Tacitus*; the other that of an Alexandrian merchant. The landed and other property of the former produced him an income of two hundred and eighty millions of sesterces, and his ready money at the time of his accession sufficed for the pay of the army. The merchant was *Firmus*, who assumed the purple in the time of *Aurelian*. This man had a great number of merchantmen on the Red Sea for his trade with India; he carried on a commerce with the interior of Africa, he contracted with the *Blemmyans* for the produce of their mines, and he had also commercial relations with the *Saracens* or *Bedoween* Arabs. He possessed moreover extensive manufactories, and it is said that he used to boast that the paper manufactured by him would suffice to maintain an army.

The Roman army at this period was evidently on the decline in respect to discipline and moral force. The soldiers were now accustomed to luxuries and indulgences unknown to the troops of the republic or of the early days of the empire.

Barbarians entered the Roman service in great numbers, and we shall ere long find officers of the very highest rank and power bearing German names.

The maintenance of good military roads had always been an object of solicitude with the Roman government. We have seen the care of Augustus on this head; and that wise emperor had also instituted a system of posts for the despatch of letters on public business, and the conveyance of persons employed by the government*. This system was now greatly extended, and post-houses were established at regular distances along all the great roads, furnished with horses, mules, and carriages for the conveyance of goods as well as persons. These beasts and carriages were provided *gratis* by the inhabitants of the district in which the post-house stood, and the supplying of them was a most onerous burthen. Any one bearing an imperial *diploma* could demand horses and carriages, and food for himself and attendants without payment. The system was in effect the same as that which prevails at the present day in Turkey, where the Sultan's *firman* corresponds exactly with the imperial *diploma*. When the emperor was on his way to any part of his dominions, his whole court and retinue were maintained at the charge of the inhabitants of the towns where he halted, and at each he expected to find a palace ready furnished. In like manner the wants of the troops when on their march were to be supplied; and when we reflect how frequently they were removed from one frontier to another, and how incessant most of the emperors were in their movements, we may form some conception of the oppression endured by the subjects.

Literature partook of the general decline. After the reign of Trajan we do not meet with a single Latin poet or historian possessing any merit. The Greek language was not, however, equally barren. Plutarch, who wrote on such a variety of subjects in so agreeable a manner, flourished under the Antonines. The witty Lucian was his contemporary. History was written by Arrian, Dion Cassius, and Herodian with more or less success. The travels of Pausanias in Greece are of great value to the modern scholar; and the medical writings of Galen, and the works of Ptolemy on astronomy and geography, long exercised a most powerful influence over the human

* This also appears to have commenced in the time of the republic: see Index Lat. to Cicero, v. Diploma.

mind in both Europe and Asia. In poetry the Grecian muse of this period aimed at no higher flight than her Latin sister.

The branch of literature (if we may so term it) most cultivated at this time was philosophy. The Stoic system found many followers; it numbered among its professors the emperor Marcus Aurelius, who bequeathed to posterity his *Meditations* in ten books, and Arrian the historian and statesman published the lessons of his master, Epictetus. But the philosophy which far eclipsed all the others, was the New Platonism of Alexandria, of which it is necessary to speak somewhat in detail.

In the writings of Plato there is much that has a mystic tone, borrowed perhaps from the Pythagoreans, or derived immediately from the East. In such parts the usual characteristics of mysticism appear; simple truths are enveloped in figurative language, and vain attempts are made at explaining things beyond the reach of human knowledge. As such we may mention the *Timæus* and similar pieces, which are certainly the least valuable portion of the philosopher's writings. But owing to their obscurity, which gives them a vague air of magnificent profundity, these were the very pieces that some most admired; and their resemblance to the dreamy speculations of the East strongly recommended them to those whose turn of mind led them to mysticism and to the cultivation of occult philosophy. Alexandria was the chief seat of this Platonism, and its professors there obtained the name of Eclectics; for taking their leading principles from the works of Plato, they added such of those of the Stoics, the Peripatetics, and of the oriental philosophy, as were capable of being brought into harmony with those of their master. The writings of Philo the Jew will show how Platonism and the Law of Moses were made to accord.

Toward the close of the second century this philosophy received a more extended form from a teacher named Ammonius Saccas, a man of great ingenuity and of a lively imagination. His object was to bring all sects of philosophy, and all forms of religion, Christianity included, into one harmonious whole. His system differed from that of the Eclectics in this, that while *they* viewed the different systems as composed of truth and error, *he* regarded them as all flowing from the one source of truth, and therefore capable of being reduced to their original unity. He held the world to be an eternal emanation of the Deity, and he adopted and extended the Egyptian and Platonic notion of Dæmons of different ranks and degrees. The human soul he asserted might by means of certain secret

rites become capable of perceiving and conversing with these intelligences. This art, which he termed *Theurgia*, was a kind of magic, the exercise of which was confined to those of highest order in the sect. With this was combined a system of rigid asceticism enjoined on all who aimed at freeing the soul from the bonds of the body: Ammonius, who was born a Christian, represented Christ as having been an admirable Theurgist; and he laboured to bring the Christian doctrine into accordance with his own peculiar views, by asserting that such parts of it as resisted his efforts were interpolations made by ignorant disciples. As many of the Christians studied in his school, the effect of the New Platonism, as it was named, or their speculations, proved extremely injurious, and many of the subsequent errors and superstitions into which they fell may be traced to that source. The most distinguished of the New Platonists were Porphyrius, Plotinus, Proclus, Simplicius, and Jamblichus. The sect flourished till the time of the final triumph of Christianity.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Persecutions of the Church.—Corruption of Religion.—The Ebionites.—Gnostic heresies.—Montanus.—The Paschal Question.—Councils.—The Hierarchy.—Platonic Philosophy, its effects.—Rites and Ceremonies.—Christian writers.

THE Christian religion during the last two centuries had made rapid progress, and extended itself to Spain, Gaul, Britain, and the most remote parts of the Roman empire; but it at the same time had to endure external persecution and internal corruption. It also underwent a change in its discipline and government, and thereby lost a portion of its original simplicity. Of these subjects we will now treat.

Nothing can be more erroneous than the idea given by Gibbon and other sceptical writers of the tolerant spirit of the ancient world. This boasted tolerance merely extended to allowing each people to follow their own national system of religion and worship their own traditional deities, provided they did not attempt to make proselytes. It was in effect the tole-

ration still to be found in Mohammedan countries ; but with respect to the worship of new or foreign deities by their own citizens, the laws both of Greece and Rome were strict and severe. One of the charges on which the excellent Socrates was condemned to death, was that of introducing new deities ; and the language of the Roman law was, " Let no one have any separate worship or hold any new gods ; nor let any private worship be offered to any strange gods unless they have been publicly adopted *." We find that this law was acted on in all times of the republic, and that the magistrates had the power to prevent any foreign mode of worship, drive from the city or otherwise punish its professors and ministers, and seize and destroy their religious books †. The reason of these laws was probably political rather than religious ; for all governments have a natural and a just aversion to secret societies, which are so easily and so frequently converted to political purposes, and the professors of a religion different from that of the state will always form a distinct society, and as they increase in numbers may prove dangerous to the political constitution.

The early Christians were unfortunate in many circumstances. The Jews, who were their most implacable enemies, were established in all parts of the empire ; and the Christians were not only exposed to their calumnies and persecutions, but as they were regarded as merely a sect of that people they came in for their share of the odium under which they lay. Again, proselytism was of the very essence of the new faith, and this was a point on which the Roman government was most jealous and apprehensive. Further, the Christians were taught to hold all idolatrous rites in the utmost abhorrence, and as these were woven into the whole texture of public and private life, they found it necessary to abstain from the theatres and from all public shows and solemnities ; and they were obliged to be equally on their guard in the relations of private life, and hence they were regarded as morose and unsociable. The spiritual monotheism of the Christians was, moreover, considered as atheism by those who had no conception of religion disjoined from temples, images, and a plurality of objects of worship. The simple rites and practices of their religion also furnished materials of calumny to their enemies. The symbol-

* Cicero, Laws, ii. 8.

† Livy, iv. 30 ; xxxix. 16. Val. Max. i. 3. Dion, iii. 36.

ical eating and drinking of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist, for example, was converted into Thyestian banquets, and their Agapæ or love-feasts were represented as scenes of riot and pollution. The Christians themselves, too, were not always prudent; they gave at times needless offence, and many exhibited what we may term a selfish eagerness to obtain the crown of martyrdom.

We thus see that the Christians were amenable to the ancient law of Rome for introducing a new religion and neglecting to comply with that of the state, and for their zeal in making proselytes to their opinions. They were at the same time odious to the vulgar, for their abstinence from the temples and the public shows. All kinds of calumnies were therefore spread abroad respecting them, and we need not wonder at these finding ready acceptance with the ignorant multitude, when we recollect how they operated on the minds of such men as Tacitus and Suetonius. To such a pitch did the popular dislike of the Christians at length rise, that the guilt of all public calamities was laid on them. "If the Tiber," says Tertullian *, "has overflowed its banks; or the Nile has not overflowed; if Heaven has refused its rain; if the earth has been shaken; if famine or plague has spread its ravages, the cry is immediately raised, 'To the lions with the Christians!'"

When Christianity had triumphed over its foes and was become the religion of the state, men began, like voyagers escaped from shipwreck, to look back with an eye of complacency on the perils through which it had passed, and felt a pleasure in magnifying its calamities and sufferings. The number of persecutions was gradually raised to the mystic number of ten, the number of the victims was prodigiously magnified, and imagination amused itself in varying the modes of their torture. The apostle John, for example, was thrown at Rome, by order of Domitian, into a caldron of boiling oil, from which he came forth unscathed; and St. Babylas was, at Pergamus, put into a brazen bull, heated red-hot; though these martyrdoms were apparently unknown to the learned Eusebius, and there are little grounds for supposing that there was any persecution in the time of Domitian. The chief inventors of these pious legends were the monks, a class of men who have always exhibited a strong inclination for the supernatural

* Apol. 40.

and the horrible. We will here briefly sketch the sufferings of the church, as they are to be derived from authentic sources*.

The first persecution of the Christians is that by Nero, above related. That, as we have seen, was merely an effort made by a tyrant to throw the guilt with which he was himself charged on a body who were generally obnoxious: there was nothing whatever religious or political in it, and we have no reason for supposing that it was of long duration or extended beyond the city of Rome. Eusebius mentions a tradition that St. Paul was beheaded and St. Peter crucified at this time, but little reliance is to be placed on such accounts, and it is extremely doubtful if the latter ever came to Rome.

Under the Flavian family the Christians were unmolested. Domitian, indeed, is said, toward the close of his reign, to have exercised some severities against them. On this occasion we are told, the two grandsons of Judas, the brother of our Lord, were brought before him, as being of the family of David. In answer to his inquiries they told him that their whole property consisted of a small piece of land, which they cultivated themselves, and they showed their hands hardened with toil. The kingdom of Christ which they expected they described as a celestial one, which would not appear till the end of the world. The tyrant, apprehending little from the heirs of such a kingdom, dismissed them with contempt, and put an end to the persecution†.

In the reign of Trajan, Eusebius says, "there was a partial persecution excited throughout the cities, in consequence of a popular insurrection," i.e. an insurrection of the populace against the Christians, the usual source of persecution. It would appear to have been very partial indeed, for he mentions but one martyr, St. Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem, a kinsman of our Lord's‡. The celebrated letter of Pliny to Trajan, however, proves that in some parts of the empire the Christians were exposed to much peril. This amiable man, being appointed governor of Pontus and Bithynia in the year 103, found numerous charges brought against persons of all

* In the following account of the persecutions we have made Eusebius our principal guide. Very few of the Acts of the Saints and Martyrs of the first three centuries, as Mosheim observes, are genuine.

† Hegesippus *ap.* Euseb. iii. 20.

‡ He afterwards speaks of that of Ignatius of Antioch, whose Epistles are extant; but some suspicion attaches both to them and to the account of his martyrdom.

ages and sexes as Christians. Unwilling to punish, and uncertain how to act, he wrote to the emperor for advice*. Trajan, in his reply, directed that the Christians should not be sought after, but that if accused and convicted they should be punished, and that no anonymous accusations should be attended to. Considering the Roman law on the subject, and the general state of sentiment and feeling at the time, this rescript is highly creditable to the humanity and the justice of the emperor. From Pliny's letter we learn that a chief ground of proceeding against the Christians was the emperor's aversion to clubs and societies (*hetærias*), for which reason Pliny was very strict in prohibiting the Christians from meeting together to celebrate the Eucharist or hold their love-feasts.

We further learn from this letter that the number of Christians was very considerable, both in the towns and in the country, and that the heathen temples had been nearly deserted; but that when the law was put in force such numbers abandoned their faith, that Pliny had strong hopes that the superstition, as he termed it, might be suppressed.

So far was Hadrian from being a persecutor, that, according to Justin Martyr†, Serenius Granianus, the proconsul of Asia, having written to him "that it did not appear just to put the Christians to death without a regular accusation and trial, merely to gratify the outcries of the populace;" he issued a rescript, addressed to Granianus' successor, Minucius Fundanus, directing him to pay no regard to mere petitions and outcries, but to judge of the accusations himself, and to punish the accused according to the quality of their offence, if it was clearly proved that they had transgressed the laws, but at the same time to punish severely any one who should bring a false and slanderous accusation. The emperor, it would seem, wrote to the same effect to some of the other governors‡.

During the reign of the excellent Antoninus Pius the Christians suffered no molestation on the part of the government; but they had much to endure from the malignity and superstition of the populace of the provincial towns of Asia. The emperor, however, interposed in their behalf, and renewed the directions of Hadrian to the authorities in the provinces.

* Plin. Ep. x. 97, 98.

† Ap. Euseb. iv. 8, 9.

‡ Euseb. iv. 26.

Hitherto the sufferings of the Christians had been comparatively light; but under the reign of the philosophic M. Aurelius a severe persecution raged against them. It is not quite clear whether any edicts were made by the emperor directing them to be punished*, but he certainly held them in contempt, and he was anxious to uphold the ancient religion and ceremonies of the state, and may therefore have been inclined to deal rigorously with those who rejected and opposed them. Still, on examining the accounts of the martyrdoms in this reign, it will appear that they resulted in general from the usual cause—the hatred of the populace toward the Christians.

The year 166, in which Aurelius first left Rome for the German war, is usually fixed on as the commencement of the persecution. A Christian, named Ptolemæus, and two others were put to death at Rome, solely, we are told, on account of their faith. On this occasion Justin Martyr (by whom we are informed of the fact) addressed his second Apology to the emperor and the senate. He was himself soon after, with some others, put to death by the city-prefect Rusticus. As Rusticus was a philosopher, and the Epicurean Crescens, Justin's great opponent, was then at Rome, there appears to be some reason for supposing that the philosophers had already adopted that spirit of inveterate hostility to the Christians which caused them to become their unrelenting persecutors. It was also in this year that the persecution broke out at Smyrna, in which the venerable bishop Polycarp, and about a dozen other Christians, suffered for their faith. The church of Smyrna wrote on this occasion an epistle to those of Pontus, from which we learn the following particulars.

The letter commenced with an account of the other martyrs and their sufferings. "The by-standers," it says, "were struck with amazement at seeing them lacerated with scourges to their very blood and arteries, that the flesh concealed in the very inmost parts of the body, and the bowels themselves were exposed to view. Then they were laid upon sea-shells, and on the sharp heads of spears on the ground, and after passing through every kind of punishment and torment were at last thrown as food for wild beasts." The youth and beauty of one of these martyrs, named Germanicus, interested the pro-

* Melito (*ap.* Euseb. iv. 26) would seem to assert that there were decrees issued against the Christians by Aurelius, but Tertullian (*Apol.* 5) avers the contrary.

consul so much, that he earnestly implored him to take compassion on himself; but the ardent youth even irritated the beast to which he was exposed, and speedily perished. The multitude then began to call for Polycarp. This venerable prelate had, on the urgency of his friends, retired from the city, but he was discovered and seized by those sent in quest of him. When brought back to Smyrna he was conducted straight to the Stadion (where public shows were exhibited), and led to the tribunal of the proconsul, who urged him to deny Christ, and swear by the genius of Cæsar. "Eighty and six years," said the holy prelate, "have I served Christ, and he never did me wrong; and how can I now blaspheme my King that has saved me?" After several vain attempts to influence him, the proconsul caused the herald to proclaim aloud, "Polycarp confesses that he is a Christian." The multitude then, both Jews and Gentiles, cried out, "This is that teacher of Asia, the father of the Christians, the destroyer of our gods, he that teaches multitudes not to sacrifice, not to worship." They insisted that a lion should be loosed at him; but being informed that that part of the show was over, they cried out that he should be burnt alive, and they forthwith began to collect wood and straw from the shops and baths for the purpose, "the Jews, *as usual*, freely offering their services." It was the custom to secure the victim to the stake with nails, but at his own request Polycarp was merely bound to it. He uttered a most devout prayer, and fire was then set to the pile. But the flames did not approach him; "they presented," says the narrative, "an appearance like an oven, as when the sail of a vessel is filled with the wind, and thus formed a wall round the body of the martyr; and he was in the midst, not like burning flesh, but like gold and silver, purified in the furnace. We also perceived a fragrant odour, like the fumes of incense or other precious aromatic drugs." The executioner at length, by the order of the people, ran him through with his sword, and the gush of blood, it is added, was so great as to extinguish the fire. At the instigation of the Jews the body of the martyr was burnt, lest, as they said, the Christians should begin to worship Polycarp instead of him that was crucified. The letter asserts that the martyrdom of Polycarp terminated the persecution at Smyrna; but as martyrs are mentioned at Pergamus, victims may still have continued to be given to the popular fury.

Hitherto the persecution of the Christians seems to have been nearly confined to Asia, and to have been chiefly excited by the Jews; but in the year 177, Gaul, whither the Gospel had now penetrated, became the scene of persecution on a scale of magnitude as yet without example. The churches of Lyons and Vienne wrote to those of Asia a full account of their sufferings, from which it appears that the governor and the populace were equally envenomed against the Christians, and that the emperor himself, when consulted on the subject, merely directed that those who were Roman citizens should be beheaded, those who renounced their faith be dismissed, leaving the rest to be exposed to the beasts, or put to death in other barbarous modes. Among the victims was Pothinus, bishop of Lyons, a venerable prelate of ninety years of age, and Attalus of Pergamus, a man of great zeal and piety. But the constancy of a female slave, named Blandina, was the subject of admiration to both Christians and Gentiles. Every refinement of torture was exercised upon her; day after day she was tortured or exposed to the beasts, which, however, would not even touch her. At length she was put into a net and flung before a furious bull, and when he had tossed her till she became insensible, she was despatched by the executioner. One of the modes of torture employed was an iron-chair made quite hot, in which the victims were compelled to sit till their flesh was literally roasted; hot plates of brass were also fastened to the tenderest parts of their bodies. Heathen slaves, belonging to the Christians, were seized, and by terror or persuasion were induced, says the letter, "to charge us with the feasts of Thyestes, and the incests of Œdipus, and such crimes as we may neither think nor speak of, and such indeed as we do not even believe were committed by men."

The reign of Commodus was a period of repose to the church. Severus also favoured the Christians in the first years of his reign; but in 202 he issued an edict forbidding any one to become a Jew or a Christian. This gave occasion to the exercise of some severities, of which the principal scene was Alexandria. In the reigns that intervened between Severus and Decius, the Christians were either favoured or unmolested, with the exception of that of Maximin, who persecuted the heads of the church, on account of their attachment to his virtuous predecessor.

Decius, as we have seen, was anxious to restore the ancient

institutions of Rome. As these were connected with the religion of the state, and as the Christians, whose faith was most strongly opposed to that religion, were now become exceedingly numerous, he saw that he must suppress their doctrine before he could hope to carry his design into effect. He accordingly issued an edict, requiring all his subjects, under heavy penalties, to return to the ancient religion, and a persecution of the church, more severe than any that had yet occurred, was the immediate result. The fervid declamation of St. Cyprian, or the highly-coloured fancy-piece of St. Gregory Nyssen on this subject, cannot be relied on with implicit confidence; but from the fact that numbers (including priests and even prelates) apostatised, and from the constancy of the tradition, there can be no doubt but that the persecution was both general and severe. The bishop of Rome suffered martyrdom, those of Jerusalem and Antioch died in prison. The celebrated Origen was also among those who suffered imprisonment and torture in this calamitous period.

Valerian is said to have been at first extremely favourable to the Christians; but when he was in the East, influenced by Macrianus, he wrote to the senate, ordering the severest measures to be adopted against them. The persecution which ensued was terminated by the captivity of the emperor in the year 260, and Gallienus wrote circulars to the bishops, authorising them to resume the public exercise of their offices, and assuring them of his protection.

Among the martyrs in the time of Valerian the most illustrious was St. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage.

This able, zealous, and eloquent prelate had prudently concealed himself during the persecution of Decius. When Valerian's first edict was issued, the proconsul summoned him before him, and informed him that the emperor required all who had abandoned the religion of the state to return to it*. Cyprian replied that he was a Christian, and a bishop, a worshiper of the true and only God. A sentence of banishment was then pronounced against him, and he was sent to Curubis, a city on the sea-coast, about forty miles from Carthage. On the arrival, however, of a new proconsul, he was allowed to return to Carthage, and reside in his gardens near the city. He had not been there long when (258)

* The prelate had been a convert.

the proconsul received positive orders to proceed capitally against the Christian teachers. An officer was therefore sent with some soldiers to arrest Cyprian and bring him before the tribunal. As his cause could not be heard that day the officer took him to his own house for the night, where he treated him with much attention, and allowed his friends free access to him. The Christians kept watch all through the night, in the street before the house. In the morning the bishop was conducted before the proconsul's tribunal. Having answered to his name, he was called on to obey the emperor's mandate, and offer sacrifice. He replied, "I do not sacrifice." The proconsul urged him, but he was firm; and that magistrate, having consulted with his council, read from a tablet his sentence in the following words: "That Thascius Cyprianus should be immediately beheaded, as the enemy of the gods of Rome, and as the chief and ringleader of a criminal association, which he had seduced into an impious resistance against the laws of the most holy emperors, Valerian and Gallienus." The bishop calmly responded, "God be praised!" the Christians, who were present in great numbers, cried out, "Let us too be beheaded with him." Cyprian was then led away to the plain before the city; the presbyters and deacons accompanied him, and aided him in his preparations for death; he took off his upper garment, and directing them to give the executioner five-and-twenty pieces of gold, laid his hands on his face and bent his head, which was struck off at a single blow. In the night his body was conveyed, amidst a multitude of lights, to the burial-place of the Christians, and there deposited, the government giving no opposition*.

After the reign of Valerian the church had rest for nearly half a century, when its last and greatest persecution broke out. We will relate that event in its proper place.

On reviewing the history of the church for the first three centuries, various subjects of reflection present themselves. We may, for example, observe, as we have already done, that the sufferings of the Christians have been greatly exaggerated by the frauds and fictions of succeeding ages; that the persecutions on the part of the Roman government were political rather than religious, as they occurred in the reigns of the best emperors, who were evidently prompted by the desire of

* There is a very circumstantial account of the martyrdom of Cyprian by the deacon Pontius, who was in attendance on him; the proconsular acts also remain, and the two accounts harmonise.

restoring the ancient institutions to which the Roman greatness was ascribed; that finally, the greatest sufferings of the Christians were caused by the fanatic spirit of the populace, especially in the cities of Asia, and at the instigation of the Jews; and were sometimes brought on by their own imprudence. It may further be observed, that the charge made against the heathen priesthood of exciting the fanaticism of the people out of regard to their own gains, does not seem to be well-founded. They did not, in fact, except in Asia Minor, form a separate caste or order; and they therefore had not the corporate spirit which would inspire them with jealousy and fears. Finally, we would observe that the popular saying, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church," should be received with great limitations. That many were led to view Christianity with a favourable eye when they saw the constancy with which even women and children met torture and death, is not to be denied; the same effects were observed in England in the time of queen Mary Tudor. But false religion, heresy, even atheism itself, have had their martyrs, and the progress of Christianity should be ascribed to its true causes, namely, its purity, and the other causes already enumerated.

It is a melancholy reflection, that giving the greatest extent consistent with truth and probability to the number of Christians immolated by the policy or the intolerance of heathen Rome, it still falls infinitely short of that of the victims sacrificed to the bigotry of papal Rome. When we think of the crusade against the Albigenses, of the 50,000 or 100,000 protestants destroyed in the Netherlands, the St. Bartholomew massacre in France, the 100,000 persons burnt by the Inquisition, and the other dreadful deeds of the church of Rome, the persecutions of Aurelius, of Decius, and even of Diocletian, shrink into absolute insignificance; and we are forced to acknowledge that the perversion of true religion can outgo any false religion in barbarity. At the same time we must protest against the acts of popery being laid to the charge of genuine Christianity.

The evils of persecution were only transient; but those inflicted by heresy and false doctrine were deep and permanent, and their ill effects are felt even at the present day. The pride of the human intellect, and the desire to discover those secrets which are not to be known to man, gave origin to most of those opinions which we find recorded as mon-

strous heresies by the Fathers of the Church. These may be all comprehended under the term Gnosis (*Γνῶσις, knowledge*), the word used to designate the false philosophy which then prevailed, and which had been derived from the sultry regions of India and Persia. To this is to be added the New Platonism of the Greeks, which however had borrowed largely of the oriental philosophy, and the Judaism or corrupted religion of the people of Israel. From these various sources flowed all the corruptions of the pure and simple religion of the Gospel; and so early did their operation commence, that it may be said that the stream had hardly burst from the sacred mount when it was defiled with mundane impurities.

It is not our intention to treat of all the heresies enumerated by the Fathers. We shall only touch upon the principal ones, commencing with those which originated in Judaism*.

From the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul, we learn that the Jewish converts in general, from devotion to their law, whose precepts they regarded as of everlasting obligation, and from their ignorance of the true nature and spirit of Christianity, held that the observance of the ceremonial law was necessary for salvation. Against this erroneous notion the apostle Paul exerted himself with the utmost vigour; and he succeeded in checking its progress among the gentile converts. It still, however, continued to prevail among the Christians of Judæa; and after the destruction of Jerusalem in the reign of Hadrian, those who persisted in maintaining it withdrew to Peræa, or the region beyond the Jordan, and formed there a church of their own. They soon, however, split into two sects named Nazarenes and Ebionites†; each of which had its peculiar Gospel, differing from those which have been received by the church in general. The former, who held that the Mosaic law was binding only on Jews, were not regarded as heretics; but the latter, denying the miraculous conception of Christ, and asserting that the Mosaic law with all the additions made to it by the traditions of the Pharisees was binding on every one,

* In the remainder of this chapter our immediate authority has been the learned, candid and judicious Mosheim. The references to Irenæus and other writers will be found in his works.

† That is, The Poor, as the term signifies in Hebrew. The best-founded opinion as to its origin is, that it was adopted by themselves on account of their humility or poverty.

were naturally placed under that denomination. Neither attained to any importance, and after no very long time their names alone remained to testify their former existence.

On looking through the ancient religions of Europe, from the Frozen Ocean to the Mediterranean, one is struck with the absence of all purely malignant beings: in those of Asia, on the contrary, we usually encounter one or more deities whose delight is in the production of evil, or whose office is destruction. In the Mosaic religion the evil power is justly represented as the mere servant of the supreme God; but in some of the uninspired creeds, he is exalted into the rival and enemy of the great Author of good. This system received its fullest development in the ancient religion of Persia, where, beside the original cause of all, there was a hierarchy of good spirits ruled over by a prince named Ormuzd, who were engaged in ceaseless conflict with Ahriman the prince of darkness, and his subordinate spirits. The Apocryphal books of the Jews show that during the Captivity they had imbibed many ideas from the religion of their conquerors; and at the time when Christianity was first promulgated, the Oriental philosophy or Gnosis, as this system is denominated, was widely spread over western Asia.

The doctrine of the two principles evidently arose from the wish to explain the origin of evil. Nature and reason lead man to regard the supreme being as purely good. That evil could not proceed from *him* was manifest; whence, then, the ills of nature and the vice and pains of man? Matter which composed the parts of the world and the bodies of man was an apparent cause; but matter, sluggish and inert, could hardly be supposed to have organised itself and produced the beauty, order and harmony so conspicuous in the material world; and if that task was assigned to the Deity, he became by necessary inference the author of all the evil that thence resulted. There must therefore have been some intelligent being the author of evil. On the subject of the nature of this being there was much difference of opinion. Some regarded him as equal to and co-eternal with the good Deity; others held him to be generated of matter; others again maintained that he was the offspring of the Deity, who from pride and envy had rebelled against the author of his being, and erected a separate state for himself. Many viewed the creator of the world as one of the spirits generated by the Deity who was moved to his work by a sudden impulse, and acted with the

approbation of the Deity, from whom pride afterwards caused him to fall off, and to seduce men to disobedience. Others thought he had a natural tendency to evil; others, that like the world and man, his work, he was composed of both good and evil. All agreed in the belief of an eternal warfare between the good and evil principles.

The professors of this philosophy gave to the good being the appellation of Depth (*Βυθός*), on account of his unfathomable nature; they named his abode the Fullness (*Πλήρωμα*), a vast expanse resplendent with everlasting light. Here he abode for ages in solitude and silence, till at length, moved by some secret impulse, he begat of himself two intelligences, one of either sex. These gave being to others, who becoming progenitors in their turn, the region of light was gradually peopled with a numerous family of blessed spirits; but the further their remove in the order of birth from the original parent, the less was their degree of goodness, knowledge and power. To the higher class of these spirits was given the name of *Æons* (*Αἰῶνες*), or eternal beings.

Matter lay rude and undigested far beyond the realms of light. It was agitated by turbulent irregular intestinal motions, and contained in it the seeds of moral and natural evil. In this condition it was found by the *Æon*, who was to give it form. This being, named the Demiurge (*Δημιουργός*) or Worker, having fashioned the world, filled it with men and other animals, giving them particles of the divine essence to animate their material bodies. He then threw off his allegiance to the author of his being, assumed the government of the world, dividing it into districts, of which he assigned the government to the inferior spirits who had assisted him in the work of creation. The Deity, however, did not abandon the world altogether. Moved with compassion for the divine portion of man which was confined in the prison of the flesh, and liable to be involved in ignorance and tainted with vice, he from time to time sent forth teachers endowed with wisdom and filled with celestial light to instruct mankind in truth and virtue; but the Demiurge and his associates persecuted and slew the divine messengers, and opposed the truth by superstition and sensual pleasures. Their efforts were but too successful; a small portion only of mankind continued in the worship of the true God and the practice of virtue; all the rest were sunk in idolatry and sensuality. The former, when freed from their bodies by death, were admitted at once into the

realms of supernal light; the latter were forced to migrate into various bodies: but the greater part, if not all of them, will at length be purified and restored to their celestial country, and then the Deity will dissolve the material world and reduce it to its primitive state, and vice and misery will cease for ever.

The belief of the essential malignity of matter was calculated to produce two opposite effects on the moral conduct of man. Some would think it their duty to invigorate the spirit and keep the body under by meditation, by fasting, by self-denial, and mortification of every kind. Hence the Yogees of Brahmanism, the Fakeers and Dervishes of Mohammedanism, and the monks of Buddhism and corrupted Christianity. Others, maintaining that the essence of piety consisted in a knowledge of the Supreme Being, and the maintenance of an intercourse with him by contemplation and abstraction, and that the pure soul was unaffected by the acts of its impure companion, held that the practice of virtue was not enjoined by the Deity, but was only the artifice of the prince of the world to keep men in obedience. They therefore freely indulged all their sensual propensities. This explains the charges of dissoluteness made against some sects of the Gnostics; but these charges, which are certainly exaggerated, must not be implicitly received.

Had this false philosophy remained distinct from Christianity, it might have proved comparatively innocuous. But the Gnostic philosophers looked forward to the appearance of another of the divine messengers who were to redeem mankind from the tyranny of the Demiurge; and many of them, struck by the miracles of Jesus Christ, and the purity, sublimity and comprehensiveness of his doctrine, which tended to abrogate the Mosaic law (regarded by them as the work of the Demiurge) and overthrow the idolatry of the heathen, saw in him the long-expected envoy of heaven and embraced his religion. Their firmly-rooted tenets, however, did not accord with its divine simplicity, and they found it necessary to modify it considerably. For this purpose they asserted that the religion of Christ consisted of two sets of doctrines; the one easy, and suited to the capacity of the vulgar, which was contained in the books of the New Testament; the other of a higher nature and deeper import, revealed by Christ in private to his apostles, for their knowledge of which they were indebted to Peter, Paul and Andrew; in whose

names they forged various Gospels and Epistles. They also maintained that the copies of the New Testament in common use had been corrupted, and produced what they affirmed to be genuine transcripts of the real originals. They moreover appealed to certain books which bore the venerable names of Seth, Noah, Abraham and other holy men as their authors, as well as to those propagated in the name of Zoroaster and other eastern sages. They thus were enabled, in conformity with their tenets, to deny that the Mosaic law was given by God, to maintain that Christ was by nature far inferior to the Father, and that he never really assumed a natural body; and totally to reject the doctrine of the resurrection, regarding all the passages relating to it as merely figurative. It proved fortunate for Christianity that the Gnostics were not united in one consistent body, but were divided into several sects: for agreeing in general principles they differed widely among themselves as to their manner of viewing and explaining particular doctrines; and their dissensions gave their adversaries many advantages in the contest.

From sundry passages in the apostolic writings*, it may be justly inferred that the Gnosis had affected Christianity within a very few years from the date of its first promulgation. It was not, however, till the second century, and the reign of Hadrian, that the Gnostics began to form themselves into sects, and became formidable to the church. We will now enumerate the principal founders of these sects, and state their leading tenets.

At the head of the Gnostic heretics is usually placed Simon Magus, who is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles; but it is extremely doubtful if he be the Gnostic teacher; and at all events he was an open enemy, and not a secret corrupter of Christianity. The same obscurity hangs over Menander and Cerinthus, who are regarded as his successors. The two former are said to have been Samaritans, the latter a Jew. All studied at Alexandria, and all held the leading Gnostic tenets. Cerinthus, however, manifested some respect for the law of Moses, declaring that such parts of it as Christ had sanctioned should be observed. He also thought more favourably than the Gnostics in general of the creator of the world, who, according to him, had acted in creation conformably to the will of the supreme Deity. He did not, therefore, regard matter as absolutely evil, or deny the resurrection. Accord-

* Col. ii. 8; 1 Tim. i. 3, 4; iv. 1 *seq*; vi. 20; 2 Tim. ii. 16; Tit. iii. 9.

ing to him, the man Jesus was born in the natural way of Joseph and Mary, and the *Æon* Christ descended on him at his baptism in the form of a dove; and previous to the crucifixion the *Æon* returned to the Pleroma, leaving the man to suffer the pains of the cross. There appear to be no grounds for charging Cerinthus with immorality of either life or doctrine. His errors were those of the head rather than of the heart.

Saturninus, a native of Antioch, was a Gnostic philosopher who embraced Christianity in the second century. He taught that Satan, the ruler of matter, was coeval with the Deity; that the world was created by seven angels without the knowledge of the Deity, who, however, was not displeased when he saw it, and breathed into man a rational soul; that he then divided the world into seven districts, the government of which he committed to the creating angels, one of whom was over the Hebrew nation, and gave it a law through Moses. Satan, he said, enraged at the creation of the world, and the virtue of its inhabitants, formed another race of men out of matter with malignant souls like his own; and hence arose the great moral differences to be observed among men. After a time the founders of the world rebelled against God, who sent his Son on earth, arrayed in an apparent body to deliver the souls of good men from both them and Satan. The moral discipline of Saturninus was ascetic and severe; he discouraged marriage; he enjoined abstinence from wine and flesh-meat; and taught to keep under the body as being formed from matter which was in its essence evil and corrupt.

While Saturninus was spreading his doctrines in Syria, an Alexandrian philosopher, named Basilides, who had also embraced Christianity, was engaged in diffusing a somewhat similar system through Egypt. The leading principles of Gnosticism formed the basis of his system also, in which the Deity and the seven *Æons* formed a sacred Ogdoad. Two of these *Æons*, named Wisdom (*Sophia*) and Power (*Dynamis*), generated certain princes or angels, who, having founded a heaven for themselves, generated other inferior angels, who, in their turn, formed a heaven and generated angels, and the process went on till the number of heavens was three hundred and sixty-five, which were all under the dominion of a supreme lord, who bore the mystic name of Abraxas*. The prince

* That is 365, for the letters of it taken as numerals, give that number. Of such nonsense is mysticism usually composed.

of the last of these heavens, which lay on the confines of the eternal matter, conceived the idea of reducing it to form, which he effected with the aid of his angels. The origin of the vice and misery of man being explained in the usual way, but of course with some variations, Basilides affirmed that Mind or Intelligence (*Noûs*), the first of the seven *Æons*, was directed by the Deity to descend on earth and put an end to the dominion of the presiding angels, and restore the knowledge of his father among them. He therefore took the semblance of a body, and when the god of the Jews caused him to be condemned to death, he adopted that of Simon the Cyrenæan, who was compelled to bear his cross, and it thus was Simon, and not Jesus, who in reality was crucified. The souls of those who obeyed the precepts of Christ would, at death, pass to the realms of supreme bliss ; those of the disobedient would migrate into the bodies of men and other animals. The body being composed of matter, which was incapable of purity, would never be raised. The moral system of Basilides was extremely rigorous. He asserted the utmost freedom of the will, declared that God would forgive no offences but those that were involuntary, and regarded the inclination to any sin as identical with the actual commission of it. Some of the followers of Basilides, however, abusing the maxim that "to the pure all things are pure," and asserting that the soul is unaffected by the acts of its material companion, plunged into vice and licentiousness.

Another Alexandrian, named Carpocrates, the contemporary of Basilides, also became the founder of a sect. His theological principles appear not to have differed much from the ordinary Gnostic ones. Writers are unanimous in describing his moral system as licentious in the extreme. In their accounts there is probably, as usual, much exaggeration ; but it is certain that he held that there was no natural distinction between good and evil, and that women and all other things should be common. We know not, however, how these principles may have been modified, so as to make them accord with the notions of the Deity, and the necessity of virtue common to him with all the Gnostic sects.

The reputation and influence of these heresiarchs were far eclipsed by those of Valentine, another Alexandrian, and a presbyter of the church. After spreading his system among his countrymen, he went to Rome, where he made such a number of proselytes, that the church, in alarm, excommunicated

him as a heretic. He then took up his abode in the isle of Cyprus, and openly became the head of a sect which was soon very widely diffused.

The system of Valentine, as transmitted to us by the ancient Fathers, is so intricate that we cannot undertake to give an account of it. It also, in wildness and absurdity, seems to transcend all others; but no doubt many things have been misunderstood, and to others Valentine might have been able to give a tolerably rational appearance. He placed in the Pleroma thirty Æons, fifteen of either sex, which he divided into three orders. To these he added four others of a different nature. Two of these last were named Christ and Holy Ghost, and the last of the Æons was Jesus, the most noble of them, who was formed by the united efforts of all the others. One of the female Æons, named Sophia, produced a daughter who was called Achamoth, and who being expelled from the Pleroma, became by a long and intricate course the origin of the world, the history of whose creation, and of the nature of man, is related with more complexity than in the other Gnostic systems, with which that of Valentine agrees in all the main points. The moral system based on this theology by Valentine, was strict and free from impurity; but many of his followers made it sanction their sensuality and vice.

Many other sects, founded on the doctrine of the two principles, are enumerated by ancient writers; but as they never were of any importance we need not notice them. The names of Bardesanes, Tatian and Marcion, however, demand some attention.

Bardesanes was a Christian of Edessa, and a writer in the defence of his faith in the time of Marcus Aurelius. He adopted and modified the oriental system, and became the founder of a sect, but he afterwards returned to the church and opposed his own doctrines. Tatian, a native of Assyria, was also a writer in the cause of his religion, and in like manner he embraced the doctrine of the two principles. His exact theological tenets are not known, but his moral system was ascetic in the extreme, for he enjoined his disciples to renounce wedlock, abstain from animal food, and live in solitude on the slightest and most meagre diet, and even to use water instead of wine in the Lord's Supper. Marcion, the son of a bishop in Pontus, being excommunicated by his own father for either his immorality or his heresy, came to Rome, where, being unable to obtain re-admission into the church, he joined

a Syrian named Cerdo, and became the head of a sect which spread widely and continued long. His system contained the usual doctrine of the two opposite principles, of the separate creator of the world, and of the unreal body of Christ. His rule of life was ascetic, and so severe as to make death an object of desire rather than of apprehension.

On taking a general view of the different modifications of Gnosticism, we find them all agreeing in recognising the eternity of matter; in regarding the founder of the world as totally distinct from the supreme Deity; in believing the bodies of men to have been formed by the former being, while their souls proceeded from the latter; and in maintaining that the body when once dissolved by death, would never be reanimated; while the soul, if it flung off the yoke of the creator of the world, would ascend to the realms of light and happiness. The Asiatic Gnostics, holding to the ancient oriental principle, believed in the existence of a separate prince of matter, the author of evil; but this prince was unknown to the systems of the Egyptian Gnostics, who, on the other hand, introduced into them Egyptian notions respecting the heavens, the stars, the descent and ascent of souls, and similar fancies.

The asceticism which springs from the doctrine of the evil nature of matter, and the consequent necessity of delivering the soul from the influence of the body, lies at the foundation of the greater part of the errors and corruptions into which the church fell. The Mosaic law, notwithstanding its numerous ceremonial observances, was a cheerful system; and Christianity, that 'perfect law of liberty,' as it is most justly called, is decidedly opposed to all austerity and rigour. Yet we find, even in the second century, the germs of those opinions and practices which gradually brought in monkery and its attendant evils. In this century appeared in Phrygia a heretic named Montanus, whose opinions were embraced by Tertullian, one of the most distinguished fathers of the church at the time, and whose system embodied many of the rigorous principles above alluded to, which had hitherto been little more than the peculiar notions of individual Christians. This visionary (for such he appears to have been) conceived that the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete promised to the apostles, had descended on himself, for the purpose of empowering him to foretell future events, and to establish a more rigorous system of morals than that founded on the precepts of Christ and his apostles. He drew

over numbers to his opinions, among whom were two wealthy women named Priscilla and Maximilla, from the former of whom the sect received one of its appellations, that of Priscillianists. His disciples, as well as himself, pretended to the gift of prophecy, and the sect spread rapidly through the empire. The bishops of Asia excommunicated Montanus and his followers, and their example was followed by the prelates in other parts, but the sect continued to exist in a separate state.

The principal features in the doctrine of Montanus were: the injunction of a greater frequency and greater rigour in fasting than had as yet prevailed in the church*; the forbidding of second marriages; the absolute and irrevocable excommunication of adulterers, as well as of murderers and idolaters; the requiring virgins as well as widows and wives (to whom the usage had hitherto been confined), to wear veils; the forbidding Christians, in time of persecution, to seek their safety in flight, or purchase it from the heathen magistrates. Montanus also, as may be inferred from the writings of his follower Tertullian, prohibited all kinds of costly attire and ornaments of the person, and discouraged the cultivation of letters and philosophy. In all these opinions, as we have said, he did little more than enforce principles which had long been held by the more rigorous members of the church; but while these had maintained them in a spirit of meekness and charity, *he* arrogantly imposed them as the dictates of the Holy Spirit, whom, consequently, those who refused to submit to these trifling and irrational precepts, would incur the guilt of resisting. This, combined with his absurd and dangerous prophecies, fully, we think, justified the church in refusing to hold communion with him.

Another source of heresy, in this period, was the nature of Christ. Praxeas, an opponent of Montanus, denied all distinction between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and affirmed that it was the Father, the sole God, that took a human body in the person of Christ. Hence his followers were named Monarchians and Patripassians. On the other hand, Theodotus and Artemon denied the divinity of Christ, and maintained that his superior excellence was solely owing to his body being divinely begotten.

The dispute of greatest magnitude in the church during

* The only fast hitherto observed in the church was that of Passion-week.

this period, was that respecting the Paschal feast, or day of the institution of the Lord's Supper. This the Asiatic Christians kept on the fourteenth day of the first Jewish month, the day of the Passover, alleging the authority of the apostles Philip and John. But as this interrupted the great fast of Passion-week observed by the church, all the other Christians deferred it till the eve of the day of the resurrection, resting on the authority of the apostles Peter and Paul. As the day of the Passover was variable, depending on the moon (the Jewish months being lunar), there was this further inconvenience; that the third day from it, that of the resurrection, did not always fall on the first day of the week, the day fixed by the church for its observance. Various attempts having therefore been made to no purpose to get rid of this anomaly, toward the close of the second century, Victor, bishop of Rome, supported by several provincial councils, wrote in very dictatorial terms to the churches of Asia, requiring them to conform to the practice of the other churches; and on their returning a spirited refusal, he was proceeding to excommunicate them, when Irenæus, bishop of Gaul, interposed, and a compromise was effected. The Asiatics, however, retained their peculiar usage till the time of the council of Nicæa.

We will now proceed to notice the government and doctrines of the church during the second and third centuries.

Each church, *i. e.* congregation, with its bishop and presbyters, was independent, forming a little republic, presided over by magistrates chosen by the people, and each measure of moment was decided by the popular voice. These churches were at first confined to the cities and towns; but gradually, as the faith was spread among the country-people, churches were formed in the villages, over which were set presbyters sent by the church in the adjacent city or large town, who exercised nearly all the functions of the bishop, and were therefore named Chorepiscopi, *i. e.* rural bishops. These daughter-churches were, however, like all others, independent; but they testified a filial reverence for the church which had founded them, and whose authority they in some sort recognised. By degrees it became the practice for the churches of a province to form themselves into an association, and to hold conventions for the discussion of matters of common interest, at which the churches were represented by their bishops. This practice is said to have originated in Greece, and it is easy to recognise the resemblance between these Synods

(*Σύνοδοι*), as they were called by the Greeks, or Councils (*Concilia*), as they were styled by the Latins, and the ancient Amphyctionies, and the *Synods* of the Achæan and Ætolian Leagues*. The laws and regulations made in these assemblies were termed Canons (*Κάνονες*), i. e. rules.

The introduction of these councils caused a great alteration in the constitution of the church. The original rights of the people became, in consequence of them, nearly evanescent, for every matter of importance was now determined by the councils. On the other hand, the dignity and authority of the prelates was proportionably enlarged. Their tone grew bolder, and they now spoke of themselves as the legitimate successors of the apostles, and empowered to impose laws by their own authority. The primitive equality among the bishops themselves also disappeared; for as it was necessary that a council should have a president, the office was bestowed on the bishop of the chief city of the province, which city was naturally selected as the most appropriate place for holding the council. Hence arose the title and dignity of Metropolitan; and further, as councils became more extensive, and began to include the prelates of more provinces than one, it was deemed expedient to have a chief for each division of the earth included in the Roman empire, and a tacit superiority was therefore conceded to the bishops of Rome, Antioch and Alexandria, with precedence to the first on account of the greater dignity of the city in which he resided. These three ecclesiastical potentates were afterwards named Patriarchs. In this manner, from the smallest beginnings, arose the Hierarchy of the church, which, in course of time, attained to such an astounding eminence.

The great estimation in which the Hebrew Scriptures were held enabled the ministers of the church to enlarge their pretensions to authority. They conceived, or represented, themselves to have succeeded to all the rights of the Jewish priesthood. The bishop accordingly claimed the rights and authority of the high-priest; the presbyters those of the ordinary priests; the deacons those of the Levites. Hence followed the demand of tithes and first-fruits, which there is abundant reason to suppose was made even before the third century. It is not unlikely that it was also these Jewish notions that gave origin

* See History of Greece, pp. 23 and 426.

to the distinction of clergy and laity*, which very early prevailed in the church.

In the third century we find among the clergy a variety of inferior officers, such as Sub-deacons, Acolyths (*attendants*), Ostiaries (*door-keepers*), Readers and Exorcists. As these performed duties which had hitherto been discharged by the deacons, we see nothing improbable in the supposition that they were indebted for their origin to the pride of these last-named ministers, who now confined themselves to the more honourable functions of their office, devolving the more menial ones on an inferior class of persons. Perhaps, however, the more simple solution will be found in the principle of the division of labour, which the great increase of the church may now have called into operation.

Such, then, was the appearance presented by the Christian church at the close of the third century. The distinction was drawn clear and broad between the clergy and the laity; the former forming an order variously subdivided, and claiming peculiar privileges. Were we to adopt the assertions of Cyprian, Eusebius and other Christian writers, who find the causes of all the persecutions in the vices of the clergy, we should view them as utterly depraved: but these writers indulged too much in rhetorical exaggeration to deserve implicit credit; and though it must be conceded, that pride, ambition, avarice, luxury, and other vices, defiled the purity of the Christian priesthood, the truth is probably contained in the assertion of Origen, that though such was undoubtedly the case, the pre-eminence, in point of virtue, in the Christian ministers, as compared with the heathen magistrates and other persons in office, was incontestable. They were, in fact, men, and as such, of different degrees of moral worth; if some were eminently bad, others were as eminently good, and the great majority indifferent. Finally, to repeat an observation already made, the errors or vices of its professors cannot be laid to the charge of the Christian religion.

The early Christians, mostly selected from the humbler walks of life, had been ignorant or careless of literature and philosophy; but in the course of time philosophers were numbered among the converts to Christianity, and their attempts at making it harmonise with their previous notions were a principal cause of its corruption. We have already shown this

* Κληρικοί, from κληρος, *lot or office*; λαϊκοί, from λαος, *people*.

in the case of the Gnostics, and we will now briefly exhibit the influence of the philosophy of Greece on the doctrines of the church.

The first philosopher who appears to have joined the Christian society, was Justin, named the Martyr. He was a Platonist, and such also were most of the other Christian philosophers, for the tenets of Plato were those which appeared most akin to the doctrines of the Gospel. But it was the Eclectic Platonism of Alexandria that was chiefly followed by the Christians, who had a seminary in that city, named the Catechetical School, which was successively presided over by Pantænus, Athenagoras, and Clement, and in which the attempt was made to bring religion and philosophy into unison. A contest prevailed between the followers of this system and the advocates for Gospel simplicity, but the victory was on the side of the former, and the formation, toward the end of the second century, of the sect of the New Platonists, by the celebrated Ammonius Saccas, assured their triumph and the corruption of the Gospel. The learned among the Christians now began, like the Gnostics, to maintain, that in the Scriptures there was, beside the literal sense, a latent and higher one; for thus only could their narratives and precepts be made to accord with the new philosophic ideas. In this they followed the example of the Jewish Platonist, Philo, who had already employed this system to some extent; and any one who peruses his writings, or those of Justin, Clement of Alexandria, and the other early Christian philosophers, will easily perceive how widely it departs from all the principles of sane interpretation. As, however, many saw the danger of making such high matters known to the simple and ignorant, the plan of the old Egyptian priesthood was adopted, and the principles of their religion were taught to the people with all plainness and simplicity, while the philosophic interpretation was reserved for the more advanced in faith, and even to them only communicated orally. Hence arose what has been termed the Secret Discipline (*Disciplina Arcani*), that is, in effect, mystic theology. Hence, too, followed a similar distinction in morals; there was one rule for the multitude, another for the aspirants to higher sanctity and to perfection. These last were, on the Gnostic principles already explained, to seek retirement and mortify the flesh, avoiding marriage and all indulgence of the senses; while the former were left to live like other men, to engage in the affairs of the world, and

become the fathers and mothers of families. This was the origin of hermits, monks and cœnobites, of whom we shall hereafter treat more largely.

A twofold distinction in the discipline and ceremonies of the church speedily followed. These philosophising Christians, reflecting on the mysteries of the heathen religions, thought that it would be becoming to have something similar in the church. The laity was therefore divided into the Profane and the Initiated or Faithful; the former, who had either not been yet baptised (such being named Catechumens or learners*), or those who for some offence had been expelled from the communion of the Faithful, were only admitted to a portion of the divine service; while the latter enjoyed all the rights and privileges of the full Christian, voting in the assemblies, being present at all parts of the service, and partaking of the Agapæ or Love-feasts, and of the Lord's Supper. A holy silence toward the profane respecting these *mysteries* was required from them. The terms belonging to the heathen mysteries were freely and fondly employed, and baptism and the Eucharist were regarded as of the most awful import, and far removed from their original simplicity. In the former, which was publicly administered every year, at Easter and Whitsuntide, by the bishop or presbyters, the persons to be baptised, after they had repeated the creed and confessed, and renounced their sins, were immersed in water, signed with the cross, anointed, and by prayer and imposition of hands dedicated to God. They then, in token of the new birth, received milk and honey, and the ceremony thus concluded. The Lord's Supper was administered every Sunday. A portion of the bread which formed a part of the ordinary oblations of the faithful, was separated, and was consecrated by the prayers of the bishop, and it then was divided and distributed, as also was the wine when it had been previously mixed with water†. A portion of both the elements was sent to those who were sick or absent. This rite was regarded as absolutely necessary to salvation, and there appears reason to believe that even in the second century the superstition respecting it was such as to cause it to be administered to infants.

It is manifest, that in form, in discipline, and in doctrine,

* Οἱ κατηχομένοι, *the being instructed.*

† Blood and water having flowed from the side of Jesus when he was pierced with the spear.

the church was no longer what it had been in the days of the apostles. Some of the changes were the necessary consequence of the progress of time and the alteration of circumstances; but others, and by far the greater in number, and most pernicious in effect, had been introduced in imitation of the Jewish hierarchy, of the mysteries of the heathen religion, and its rites and ceremonies, or from the desire to make Christianity correspond with the philosophy of the East, or with that of Plato. Though the effect was injurious, the motives of the authors of the changes were in general pure, and they acted more from ignorance than design.

During this period the church began to have a literature of its own. The apostolic Fathers (as those are named who had been contemporaneous with any of the apostles), Clement of Rome, Barnabas, Hermas, Ignatius and Polycarp, have left some writings, all, with the exception of a trifling allegory, the Shepherd of Hermas, in the epistolary form. But some are spurious, and others have suffered from interpolation, and they are on the whole of little value except as witnesses of the doctrine of the church in their time. Their immense inferiority to those of St. Paul is very striking. In the second century flourished Justin Martyr, Athenagoras and Theophilus, who wrote Apologies or defences of the Christian religion, beside treatises on various subjects. Irenæus, bishop of Lyons in Gaul, has left a work in five books against heresies, whence we chiefly derive our knowledge of them. Clement of Alexandria, a man of great learning, but too eager to find the heathen philosophy in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, was the author of numerous works, three of which, namely, the *Pædagogus*, the *Exhortation*, and the *Stromata*, or Patchwork, have come down to our times. The only Latin writer remaining from this century is Tertullian, bishop of Carthage, a man of vigorous capacity, but feeble in judgement, and morose and melancholy in temper. His style possesses strength, but wants elegance; and his arguments are rather rhetorical, than correct and convincing.

The principal Greek writers among the Christians of the third century were Julius Africanus, Dionysius the Great, bishop of Alexandria, Gregory, bishop of New Cæsarea (named *Thaumaturgus*, *i. e.* Wonder-worker, from the miracles which he was said to have wrought), Methodius, and Hippolytus; but their works, which were not of a high order, have mostly perished. Far superior to all of this or the pre-

ceding age, was Origen, a presbyter of Alexandria, a man of most extensive learning, of profound piety, and of high talent; but in whom, as in most of the Fathers, imagination largely preponderated over judgement.

The Latin writers of this century were Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, and the two apologists, Arnobius and Minucius Felix. Cyprian was pious and eloquent; but his style is too rhetorical, and his temper was too haughty and overbearing.

HISTORY

OF

THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

PART III.

THE CHRISTIAN EMPERORS.*

CHAPTER I.†

DIOCLETIAN AND MAXIMIAN.

A.U. 1038-1056. A.D. 285-303.

State of the Empire.—Character of Diocletian.—Imperial Power divided.—The Bagauds.—Carausius.—Rebellion in Egypt.—Persian War.—Triumph of the Emperors.—Their Resignation.—Persecution of the Church.

THE Roman empire had now lasted for three centuries. During that period, the forms of the republic under which the policy of Augustus had concealed the despotism of the imperial rule, had been silently laid aside, and the people were become accustomed to the display of arbitrary power upheld by the arms of the soldiery. Occasionally a faint gleam of the ancient Roman spirit broke forth, as in the time of the emperor Tacitus; but the general aspect presented by the inhabitants of the Eternal City, as it now began to be called, was that of a sensual, enervated nobility, and a beggarly turbulent populace. The provinces, enjoying the rights of which Rome had once been so jealous, exhibited more of virtue and of vigour, and nearly all the emperors for the two last centuries

* This title, like that of Part II., is only in a general sense.

† Authorities: The Epitomators, the Panegyrist, and Lactantius.

had been provincials by origin. While the civil condition of the empire was thus undergoing inevitable change, its ancient systems of religion were fast receding before that of the Gospel, and an experienced eye might easily discern that the final triumph of the latter was certain. We are now to witness that triumph, to behold at the same time the Roman emperors assuming the pomp and parade of the monarchs of the East, the irruptions of the barbarians becoming every day more formidable, and the empire of the West finally sinking beneath their attacks.

Diocletian, into whose hands the empire had now fallen, was another of those able Illyrian peasants whom their own talents and merits had raised to the height of imperial power. He is said to have been the freedman, or the son of a freedman, of a Roman senator named Anulinus. The place of his birth was a small town in Dalmatia*. He entered the army, and gradually rose to the post of commander of the bodyguards, which he held when the votes of his companions in arms invested him with the purple. Good sense and prudence were the distinguishing features in the character of the new emperor. His courage was calm and collected rather than impetuous, and he never employed force where policy could avail. In this, as in some other points, he resembled Augustus, and the personal courage of both has accordingly been called into question by malignant or superficial observers. The empire which Augustus had founded Diocletian remodeled, and his name stands at the head of a new order of things.

Diocletian used his victory over Carinus with a moderation which had never hitherto been equaled. None of the adherents of his adversary suffered in life, fortune, or honour. Though unversed in letters and ignorant of the philosophy of the schools, he appreciated the mild philosophy of M. Aurelius, and declared his intention of making him his model in the art of government. In imitation of that emperor, or more probably from the suggestion of his own sound judgement, he resolved to give himself a partner in the empire. The extensive frontiers of the Roman dominion were now so constantly and so vigorously assailed by the Persians and Germans, that no single person could attend to their defence, and

* Its name is supposed to have been Doclia, from a tribe of Illyrians, and his own name was probably Docles, which he Hellenised to Diocles, and then Latinised to Diocletianus. See Gibbon, ch. xiii. The gentile name of his patron was apparently Valerius.

experience had shown that generals entrusted with the command of large armies might become the rivals of their sovereigns. The person whom Diocletian fixed on as his colleague was his ancient mate in arms Maximianus, who, born a peasant in the district of Sirmium, had like himself risen solely by merit. A second Marius, Maximian was rude, brutal and ferocious, a brave soldier, an able officer, but neither a general nor a statesman of any account. For the superior wisdom and knowledge of Diocletian he had the utmost respect, and he always stood in awe of his genius. It is remarkable that Diocletian was able to exercise as much influence over the rude Maximian as Aurelius had possessed over the luxurious Verus—a proof perhaps of his greater force of mind.

Diocletian first conferred on his friend the inferior dignity of a Cæsar, and then raised him to the more elevated rank of an Augustus (Apr. 1, 286). On this occasion the emperors assumed, the one the surname of Jovius, the other that of Hercules, 'in allusion to their different characters, and the parts they were to bear in the state. Diocletian retained for himself the administration of the provinces of the East, and fixed on Nicomedia as his place of residence; to Maximian he assigned those of the West, and Milan became his imperial abode.

In the following year (287) Maximian found employment for his arms in suppressing an insurrection of the peasantry of Gaul, who under the name of Bagauds, a term of dubious origin*, were spreading devastation through the country. It is remarkable, that at all periods of her history France has presented the spectacle of a rural population reduced to the extreme of misery by the oppression of an aristocracy or of the government. Predial servitude to a tyrannic nobility was the condition in which the Romans found the Gallic peasantry; under their own dominion the same system was continued, and the evil was aggravated by the weight of taxation, and the insolence of a haughty soldiery. The Franks and other German conquerors succeeded to this power, and transmitted it to the feudal lords of the middle ages, with whose descendants it continued to the close of the eighteenth century; and in consequence of the extreme division of landed property which has since taken place, and the high direct taxes imposed on the proprietors, the government appears likely to become ere long the owner of the far greater part of the produce of

* It is derived by some from the Celtic *Bagad*, a tumultuous assembly.

the soil, and the cultivators to sink gradually to the condition of the serfs, their ancestors.

The *jacquerie*, or insurrection of the French peasantry in the fourteenth century, as narrated in the graphic and animated pages of Froissart, will enable us to form a conception of the rising of the Bagauds in the fourth century. In both cases the insurgents were unable to make head against the fully armed troops opposed to them; in both the vengeance taken on them was cruel and remorseless.

The leaders of the Bagauds, named Ælianus and Amandus, had assumed the imperial ensigns (their coins may still be seen); but their ambition was short-lived. A more fortunate usurper appeared in Britain. The Franks and other German tribes of the north coast having now begun to addict themselves to piracy, a Roman fleet was stationed at Boulogne (*Bononia*) in order to protect the coasts of Gaul and Britain from their ravages. The command of this fleet was given to Carausius, a native of that country (*i. e.* a Menapian), a man of very low origin, but skilled in navigation and of approved courage. It was soon discovered that the pirates used to pass down the channel unobserved or unmolested, but that they were apt to be intercepted on their return, and that a considerable part of the booty gained from them never found its way into the imperial treasury. Maximian, convinced of the guilt of the admiral, gave orders for his death; but the fleet was devoted to Carausius, and he passed with it over to Britain, and having induced the legion and the auxiliaries stationed there to declare for him, he boldly assumed the purple; and the emperors, after some fruitless attempts to reduce him, were obliged (289) to acknowledge his rank and title.

It soon appeared that even two emperors would not suffice for the defence of the provinces, and Diocletian resolved to associate two other generals in the imperial power. Under the title of Cæsars they were to rank beneath the emperors, but their power was to be absolute in the parts of the empire assigned them. The persons selected were Galerius Maximianus, a native of Dacia named Armentarius, from his original employment of a herdsman, and Constantius*, a grand-nephew in the female line of the emperor Claudius. The former was, as might be expected, rude and martial; the latter, though a

* He is usually named Chlorus, from his pallid hue, as it would appear, though the Panegyrist (v. 19.) speaks of his *rubor*. Tillemont says that it is only in the later Greek writers that his name Chlorus appears.

soldier from his youth, was polished in manners, and mild and amiable in temper. Perhaps it was in imitation of the policy of Augustus that Diocletian required the Cæsars to divorce their wives and marry the daughters of himself and his colleague. He bestowed the hand of his own daughter Valeria on Galerius, and Theodora, the step-daughter of Maximian, became the wife of Constantius. For himself Diocletian reserved Thrace, Egypt and the Asiatic provinces, while his Cæsar Galerius governed those on the Danube; Maximian held Italy and Africa; his Cæsar Constantius had charge of Spain, Gaul and Britain.

The power of Carausius, the ruler of this last-named island, was now at its height: by repressing the incursions of the Caledonians and the invasions of the Germans, he preserved internal tranquillity; his fleets rode triumphant on the ocean, and he still retained Boulogne and its district on the continent. But the loss of a rich province was galling to the pride and the dignity of the empire, and Constantius undertook the task of reducing the British ruler (292). By running a mole across the harbour of Boulogne he obliged that town and a great part of the usurper's fleet to surrender. While he was preparing a fleet for the invasion of the island he received intelligence of the death of Carausius, who was assassinated (294) by Allectus, his principal minister. The murderer assumed the vacant power and dignity, and more than two years elapsed before Constantius had assembled a fleet and army sufficient to attempt the recovery of the island. At length (296) he prepared to invade it in three separate places. The first division under the prætorian prefect Asclepiodotus put to sea on a stormy day, and by the favour of a fog having escaped the fleet of Allectus, which lay off the Isle of Wight, effected a landing in the West. As soon as his troops had debarked, the prefect set fire to his shipping. Allectus, who had taken his station with a large army at London to await the arrival of Constantius, hastened to the West, but his troops were few and dispirited, and after a brief conflict he was defeated and slain*. Constantius when he landed met with no opposition, and this noble island was thus, after a separation of ten years, re-united to the empire.

Africa and Egypt gave at this time occupation to the two emperors. In the former a man named Julian assumed the

* Compare the invasion of England by William the Norman.

purple at Carthage, and five confederated Moorish tribes invaded the province. But on the appearance of Maximian Julian stabbed himself, and the Moors were easily defeated, and forced to abandon their mountain-fastnesses. In Egypt one Achilleus had assumed the purple at Alexandria, and the Blemmyans were ravaging the valley of the Upper Nile. Diocletian sat down with a large army before Alexandria: he cut the aqueducts which supplied it with water, and strongly secured his camp against the sallies of the besieged; and after eight months the rebellious city was obliged to surrender at discretion. A severe vengeance was taken, and many thousands of the inhabitants were slaughtered; the cities of Busiris and Coptos were totally destroyed, and all Egypt suffered by sentences of death or exile. To oppose an effectual barrier to the incursions of the Blemmyans, the emperor induced the Nobetæ or Nubians to quit their abodes in the deserts, and settle in the country about Syene and the Cataracts, which he resigned to them on the condition of their guarding that frontier of the empire. While he remained in Egypt, Diocletian made many wise laws and regulations calculated to promote the happiness and prosperity of the country*.

A war ensued with Persia on account of Armenia. We have seen that from the time of Augustus, the Roman emperors had claimed and exercised the right of bestowing the investiture of that kingdom. After the defeat, however, of Valerian, the Persian monarch, having caused the Armenian king Chosroes to be assassinated, had made himself master of the country. Tiridates, the infant son of the murdered monarch, was saved by his friends and committed to the care of the Roman emperors. He grew up strong, active, dexterous in the use of arms, and undauntedly courageous; and he won the warm friendship of Licinius, the sworn mate and friend of Galerius. At the instance of this last, Diocletian declared Tiridates king of Armenia, and as soon as the new monarch appeared on the frontiers (286), the Armenians, weary of the insults and oppression of the Persians, received him with transports of joy. The Persian garrisons were

* Among others he directed that a strict search should be made "for all the ancient books which treated of the admirable art of making gold and silver," and committed them to the flames. This is the earliest mention of the vain science of Alchemy. See Gibbon, *ut supra*. This folly still prevails in the East. See Fraser's Travels in Koordistan, &c., for an instance at the present day.

speedily driven out of the country, and as a civil war was raging at the time among the Sassanian princes, Tiridates was able not only to recover Armenia, but to carry his arms into Assyria. When, however, the civil conflict terminated, and Narses was acknowledged king of Persia, the whole force of the empire was turned against the revolted Armenians, and Tiridates was once more obliged to seek the protection of the Roman emperors.

As the language of Narses now became insolent and menacing, and prudence and honour alike demanded the restoration of Tiridates, Diocletian prepared for war (296). Fixing his own abode at Antioch, he committed the conduct of the war to Galerius, whom he had summoned for the purpose from the banks of the Danube. Galerius crossed the Euphrates, and entered on the plains of Mesopotamia. After some indecisive fighting, the clouds of Persian cavalry enveloped his army, which was far inferior in number, on the very ground which more than three centuries before had witnessed the defeat and death of Crassus. The Romans sustained a total overthrow, and Galerius, when he reached Antioch, had the mortification to be received with cold austerity by Diocletian, whose chariot he had to follow on foot in his imperial purple for the length of a mile.

A new army, however, was soon formed from the troops of Illyricum and the Gothic auxiliaries, and Galerius, at the head of 25,000 gallant soldiers, was permitted again to try his fortune (297). Warned by experience, he now shunned the plains, and advanced through the mountains of Armenia. In person, attended by only two horsemen, he undertook the perilous task of exploring the strength and the dispositions of the hostile force. He then made a sudden attack on the Persian camp; and the rout of the enemy was instantaneous and complete. Narses, who was wounded in the action, fled to Media; the camp, replete with riches, became the prey of the victors*; the monarch's own harem fell into the hands of the Romans; and rude as was the nature of Galerius, his treatment of the royal ladies equaled that of Alexander the Great on a similar occasion. Diocletian, when he heard of

* A Roman soldier, it is said, meeting with a leathern bag full of pearls, threw away the latter, of which he could not conceive the use, and kept the bag. Am. Marc. xxii. 4. The same story is told of one of the followers of the first Khalifehs, but the Arab previously tried to chew the pearls, taking them for grains of millet.

this great victory, set out from Antioch, and met the now elated Galerius at Nisibia. Here they were soon waited on by Apharban, a person high in the confidence of the Persian monarch, with proposals for a treaty of peace. After an interview with the emperors, the Persian was dismissed with an assurance that Narses should speedily be informed of the terms on which peace might be obtained. The secretary, Sicorius Probus, accordingly soon after appeared in the Persian camp, and peace was concluded on the following conditions. All the northern Mesopotamia was to be resigned to the Romans, and the river Aboras* was to form the boundary of the two empires in that country; five provinces beyond the Tigris† were also to be ceded to the Romans; Tiridates was to be restored and his dominions augmented; and the kings of Iberia were to be nominated by the Roman emperors.

The empire was now externally at rest, the revolted provinces had been recovered, and the frontiers extended; Diocletian, therefore, took the occasion of the commencement of the twentieth year of his reign (303), for celebrating a triumph for the victories obtained by his arms and under his auspices. For this purpose he repaired to Rome, which he had not yet honoured with his presence, and he and Maximian triumphed jointly (Nov. 20), for Africa, Egypt, Britain and other countries, but more especially for Persia. The ceremony displayed the usual pomp and magnificence; one circumstance, unknown at the time, distinguished it from all others—it was the last real triumph that Rome was to witness.

The importance of the Eternal City had suffered a serious diminution by the altered circumstances of the empire, which demanded the presence of the sovereigns nearer to the frontiers. The senate lost the consideration which it had heretofore enjoyed, the once formidable prætorian guards were greatly reduced in number and influence, and they had ceased to be the protectors of the imperial person, their place as such being occupied by two legions of the army of Illyricum, which were named Jovians and Herculians, from the titles of the emperors.

The stay of Diocletian, in this his first and last visit to the capital of the empire, did not exceed two months. The freedom and familiarity of the populace was harsh and unpleasant

* This river rose near the Tigris, ran by Singara, and entered the Euphrates at Circesium.

† Namely, Zabdicene, Arzinene, Corduene, Moxoene and Intiline.

to his ear, accustomed to the submissive adulation of Greeks and Orientals; motives of policy may also have concurred to give him a distaste for Rome. He quitted that capital therefore in the midst of the winter, and proceeded through Illyricum to the East. The fatigue of the journey and the severity of the weather brought on a lingering illness. He was obliged to travel by short stages, and mostly in a close litter, and he did not reach Nicomedia till toward the end of the summer (304). His disorder had then become serious, and it was not till the March of the following year (305) that he was able to appear in public. During his long confinement he had reflected on the incompatibility of the cares of empire with the attention and indulgence which his advanced age and declining health demanded, and he adopted the resolution of resigning his imperial power and retiring into private life. He communicated his intention to Maximian, and however adverse that restless emperor might be to parting with his power, he had been too long in the habit of submitting implicitly to the dictates of his wiser colleague to refuse compliance. On the same day (May 1), as had been previously arranged, both the emperors, the one at Nicomedia, the other at Milan, performed the ceremony of their abdication, and the Cæsars Galerius and Constantius became emperors in their stead*. Diocletian retired to his native province of Dalmatia, where, in the neighbourhood of the city of Salona, he built a magnificent palace, and employed his hours in gardening and planting†. Maximian fixed his abode at a villa in Lucania, but we are not informed how he passed his days.

The abdication of Diocletian is the earliest instance which history records of the voluntary relinquishment of supreme power. It is the only one to be found in the ancient world‡, but examples, though rare, occur in modern times. That of the emperor Charles V. will present itself to the minds of most readers, but that monarch's abdication was the result of disappointed ambition, and his leisure was less nobly occupied

* If we may credit the author of the work *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, Galerius forced Diocletian to resign.

† Diocletian survived his abdication about eight years. He died in 313. When urged by the instances of Maximian and Galerius to resume his power, he replied, "I wish you could see the potherbs planted by my own hands at Salona, and you would surely never think that power should be resumed."

‡ Sulla, though he laid down his office, retained his authority. Appian, B. C., i. 103. Hist. of Rome, p. 353.

than that of the Roman emperor. The Turkish sultan Moorad II. twice quitted his throne for the enjoyment of private life, but he was each time recalled to it by the dangers of the state. The Spanish king Philip V. also abandoned the pomp of royalty for the practice of devotion, but the death of his son and successor obliged him to resume the sceptre. Devotion and other causes had in earlier times produced resignations among the princes of the states founded on the ruins of the Roman empire.

It is rather remarkable, that a prince like Diocletian, born in the humbler walks of life, and trained up in arms, should have been the introducer of oriental usages into the palace of the Roman emperors. But he seems to have been actuated by policy rather than pride or vanity; he conceived that investing the emperor with the splendour of apparel, and rendering him difficult of access, would make him more venerable in the eyes of the multitude, and induce a more absolute submission to his will. He and his colleague therefore assumed the diadem, which ornament distinguished them from the Cæsars: the purple robes of the emperors were of silk and gold, and their shoes were adorned with precious stones. Numerous officers attended at the palace, and the care of the interior apartments was committed to eunuchs. When any one appeared before the emperor, he was required to fall prostrate and worship him after the fashion of the East. This display of imperial pomp, and the maintenance of four separate courts, caused an enormous increase of taxation, and consequent oppression of the people. We shall presently explain the whole of the altered imperial system more at length.

Toward the end of the reign of Diocletian and Maximian, the last and greatest persecution of the Christian church commenced. Its origin was as follows.

Christianity, as has been already observed, was now most widely spread, and Christians were to be found in all the ranks and conditions of society. Diocletian, though he himself adhered to the ancient faith, was tolerant, if not even favourable to the new religion, which his wife and daughter are said to have secretly embraced, and which was openly professed by the imperial eunuchs Lucianus, Dorotheus, Gorgonius and Andreas, and by most of the principal officers of the palace. The Christian bishops were treated with respect, and new and more stately churches were rising in all the cities of the empire. But amid this seeming prosperity, a

close observer might discern the distant approach of a tempest. Maximian and Galerius were both inveterately hostile to the Christian faith, while the zeal and jealousy of the polytheists were alarmed at its rapid progress. They clung more closely to the religion of their ancestors when they saw it menaced with destruction, and the new philosophy which had based itself on the ancient superstition, inspired its professors with hatred for its enemies and opponents. The philosophers saw plainly that by reasoning and eloquence alone its sinking cause could not be maintained, and that its only resource was the employment of violent measures. We therefore find that the philosophers were the directors of the subsequent persecution, and the chief suggestors of the means for giving it efficacy.

Galerius passed the winter after the conclusion of the Persian war at Nicomedia, and during that period he had frequent conferences with Diocletian on the subject of Christianity. He represented to the emperor how utterly incompatible it was with the ancient institutions of the state, forming, as it did, an empire within the empire, all whose members were regularly organised, and ready to act at any time as one man. Diocletian confessed that he saw the danger, and agreed to exclude the Christians from offices in the army and the palace, but he expressed his disinclination to shed their blood, as not merely cruel, but impolitic. Galerius, not content, prevailed on him to summon a council of the principal civil and military officers, to take the important matter into consideration; and the council, when it met, seconded the views of the Cæsar, into whose hands the reins of power were likely soon to fall. Diocletian, we may suppose, yielded to the arguments that were employed, as a man of superior mind does when he gives way to his inferiors in intellect, foreseeing the consequences, but unable to prevent them. A system of persecution was therefore projected, and preparations were made for carrying it into effect.

From a motive probably of superstition, the day of the Terminalia, or festival of Terminus the god of boundaries (Feb. 23), was fixed for that of commencing to set limits to the inroads made on the ancient faith of Rome. At dawn on that day (303), the prætorian prefect, accompanied by some of the higher officers of the army and the revenue, proceeded to the principal church of Nicomedia. The doors were broken open, the holy books were taken out and committed to the flames, and the sacred edifice was demolished.

Next day an edict was published, ordering the demolition of all the churches throughout the empire, and forbidding any secret religious assemblies to be held; the bishops and presbyters were commanded to deliver up the sacred books to the magistrates, by whom they were to be burnt, and all the property of the church was declared to be confiscate. Christians were pronounced incapable of holding any office, and Christian slaves were excluded from the boon of manumission. The judges might determine any action brought against a Christian, but no legal remedy was granted to the Christian when the object of injury. The whole Christian body was thus degraded, robbed of its public property, and put without the pale of the law; but the persecution still stopped short of blood.

This edict was, in the usual manner, exposed to public view. But it had scarcely been displayed when a zealous Christian tore it down, uttering invectives against its authors. His offence was treason, and he expiated it with his life, being burnt at a slow fire. In the course of the following fortnight, flames burst out twice in the palace; and as it was clear that they were not accidental, they were ascribed to the vengeance of the Christians, by whose writers the guilt is transferred to Galerius, who thus, they say, sought to irritate Diocletian against them. Whatever was the truth, the effect which Galerius desired was produced on the emperor's mind. The imperial eunuchs were tortured and put to death with circumstances of the utmost barbarity. Anthemus the bishop of Nicomedia, was beheaded, and several of his flock perished at the same time.

A series of cruel edicts succeeded. By one, the governors of provinces were ordered to cast all the Christian ecclesiastics into prison; by a second, they were enjoined to employ every kind of severity in order to make them abandon their superstition, and sacrifice to the gods; by a third (304), the magistrates were commanded to force all Christians, without distinction of age or sex, to sacrifice to the gods, and to employ every kind of torture for that purpose. The issuing of this edict was one of the last public acts of Diocletian, as his resignation took place in the course of the year.

The efforts of Diocletian and Galerius were seconded by Maximian, who hated the Christians; and the persecution raged in Italy and Africa as in the East; but the mild Constantius protected the persons of his Christian subjects, though

he found it necessary to consent to the demolition of their churches. The entire duration of the persecution was ten years (303–313); it was more or less violent in different times and places, and according to the characters and political circumstances of the princes. On the part of the persecutors, every refinement of barbarity was practised; on that of the persecuted, there was an abundant display of zeal and courage, though in many cases adulterated with fanaticism. At the same time, there were many, even bishops and presbyters, who gained the opprobrious title of *Traditors*, by delivering the sacred Scriptures into the hands of the heathen. From the vague language employed by the ecclesiastical writers, it is difficult to form any clear idea of the number of those who suffered martyrdom in the space of these ten years. Gibbon estimates it at two thousand persons, but his prejudices would lead him to put it at the lowest possible amount. Supposing it, however, to be five, or even ten times that number, it would still be far short of that of the victims in any one of the religious massacres perpetrated by the church of Rome.

CHAPTER II.*

GALERIUS. CONSTANTIUS. SEVERUS. MAXENTIUS. MAXIMIAN.
LICINIUS. MAXIMIN. CONSTANTINE.

A.U. 1057–1090. A.D. 304–337.

The Emperors and Cæsars.—Constantine.—Maxentius.—Fate of Maximian.—War between Constantine and Maxentius.—Constantine and Licinius.—Constantine sole Emperor.—Constantinople founded.—Hierarchy of the state.—The Army.—The Great Officers.—Conversion of Constantine.—Deaths of Crispus and Fausta.—The Imperial Family.—War with the Goths.—Death and Character of Constantine.

Galerius and Constantius.

A.U. 1057–1059. A.D. 304–306.

THE task of appointing Cæsars, in the place of himself and Constantius, was assumed by the haughty Galerius. For his own associate he selected his nephew Daza or Maximin, and

* Authorities: Zosimus, the Epitomators and Panegyrist, Lactantius, Eusebius, and the Ecclesiastical Historians.

an Illyrian named Severus was appointed to the same dignity under Constantius: the government of Egypt and Syria was committed to Maximin; that of Italy and Africa to Severus.

Little more than a year elapsed after the retirement of Diocletian, when events occurred which proved the futility of his plan for governing the Roman world by emperors with subordinate Cæsars. The first took place on the occasion of the death of Constantius, who expired at York on the 25th of July, 306. According to the rule established by Diocletian, Severus should have become the Augustus, and a new Cæsar have been appointed; but the soldiers of the army of Britain insisted that the eldest son of the deceased emperor should succeed to his rank and power. This son was Constantine, afterwards so renowned. His mother, named Helena, was the daughter of an innkeeper, and Constantius had been obliged to divorce her on the occasion of his elevation to the rank of Cæsar. Constantine, who was then about eighteen years of age, engaged in the service of Diocletian, and distinguished himself in the Egyptian and Persian wars. He rose to high rank in the army; his appearance, manners and qualities were such as were sure to win the favour of the people and the soldiery, and Galerius when emperor marked him out as the object of his jealousy. Alarmed at the dangers to which he knew him to be exposed, Constantius earnestly besought of Galerius to allow his son to repair to him. After many delays that emperor gave a reluctant consent, and Constantine, fearful of treachery, sailed with the utmost speed, and joined his father as he was embarking for Britain. There can be no doubt that the accession was not the mere spontaneous offer of the soldiers, but that Constantine had employed the usual artifices to secure the promises on this occasion, for in fact the empire was safe to lay in empire. He, however, affected to be a reluctant prince, and wrote to Galerius, expressing his first emotions of surprise and joy, but on calm reflection, he saw the danger of a civil war, and the hardy legions of Britain consented to give Constantine a share of the imperial power, giving him the title of Cæsar, and the humble dignity of Augustus. Satisfied with the increase of power, he conferred the dignity of Cæsar on his son. Satisfied with the increase of power, he conferred the dignity of Cæsar on his son. Satisfied with the increase of power, he conferred the dignity of Cæsar on his son.

dominions, and he discharged the duties of an affectionate brother to his six half-brothers and sisters, whom his father, when dying, had committed to his care.

Galerius, Constantine, Maxentius, Licinius.*

A.U. 1059-1066. A.D. 306-313.

The next event which proved the instability of the new form of government, commenced with an insurrection at Rome. From the time of the conquest of Macedonia, a period of nearly five centuries, the people of Rome had been free from all direct taxes; but now, in conformity with the new principles of government, Galerius prepared to impose a uniform property- and capitation-tax on the whole empire; and as no exemptions were to be allowed, the officers of the revenue began to make a list of the properties and persons of the inhabitants of the capital. At the same time directions were given for the removal of the prætorian cohorts from the city, and for the demolition of their camp. The pride of the soldiers, the self-interest of the citizens, caused them to unite in the determination of liberating Italy, and electing a native emperor. They cast their eyes on Maxentius, the son of Maximian, and son-in-law of Galerius, a young man of neither talents nor virtue, who was then residing in a villa near the city. He readily yielded to their desires; the prefect of the city and a few other officers were massacred, and Maxentius was invested with the purple. Severus, who was at Milan, prepared to march against the rebels, who on their part invited Maximian to quit his retreat, and give them the advantage of his name and his experience; and the old emperor, who may have had a greater share in the previous transactions than is commonly supposed, lost no time in repairing to Rome. He there re-assumed the purple, and his influence and authority caused numerous defections to take place in the army of Severus, when that prince appeared before the walls of the city. Severus found it therefore necessary to retire and to shut himself up in Ravenna, where, as the works were going and his fleet commanded the sea, he might easily maintain himself till Galerius should come to his relief. Deceived, however, by the artifices of Maximian, he laid

* We only mention here the principal emperors.

down his dignity, and surrendered himself on the promise of his life being secured. He was at first treated with respect, but when Galerius invaded Italy the captive emperor was put to death.

Constantine, at the head of the Gallic legions, had it evidently in his power to confirm or to overthrow the dominion of the new emperors. To win him over, Maximian undertook a journey to Gaul, and by giving him in marriage his daughter Fausta, and conferring on him the dignity of Augustus, he secured his neutrality, if not his active co-operation. Galerius soon appeared in Italy at the head of the troops of Illyricum and the East, and advanced to Narni, within sixty miles of Rome, whence he sent two of his principal officers to try to induce Maxentius to trust to his generosity rather than to risk the hazard of war. His offers were spurned at, and so large a number of his men were gained over by Maximian, that he was obliged to make a rapid retreat, and his troops on their route devastated the country in the most merciless manner. Some time after (307) Galerius conferred the dignity of Augustus on his early and constant friend Licinius; and when the account of this elevation reached Maximin in the East, he caused himself to be saluted emperor by his troops. Galerius found it necessary to acquiesce in his assumption, and the Roman world thus was ruled by six emperors at the same time. A pre-eminence was however tacitly conceded to Maximian and Galerius by their respective co-emperors.

Maximian and his son were too opposite in character to remain long at unity. One or other it was found must resign the supreme power in Italy, and the prætorian guards having decided in favour of Maxentius, under whom they expected to enjoy more license, the aged emperor was obliged to seek a refuge with his son-in-law in Gaul. By Constantine he was received with every mark of respect; and as the restless temper of the Franks required his own frequent presence on the lower Rhine, in the periods of his absence he committed the government of southern Gaul to his father-in-law. The abode of Maximian was at the palace of Arles, and when one time (310) a report was spread of the death of Constantine, who was carrying on war beyond the Rhine, the restless old man seized the royal treasures and distributed them among the soldiers, in the hope of being saluted by them sole emperor. As soon as intelligence of his proceedings reached

Constantine, he made a rapid march from the Rhine to Châlons on the Saone, embarked his troops on that river, and thence entering the Rhone at Lyons, arrived at Arles, before his departure from the Rhine was known. Maximian escaped from that city and took refuge at Marseilles; he was pursued thither by Constantine, to whom he was delivered up by the garrison, and he was either put to death or ordered to terminate his life by his own hand*.

Galerius did not long survive Maximian. He died the following year (311) of the same odious disease as the great dictator Sulla. Licinius and Maximin immediately prepared to decide by arms the possession of his dominions, but they were finally induced to accommodate their dispute by treaty, and divide the disputed territories, and the Hellespont and Bosphorus became the boundary of their respective dominions. A sense of common interest soon united Licinius and Constantine, and a secret alliance was formed between Maximin and Maxentius.

The contrast between the administration of Constantine and that of Maxentius was of a most striking character. In Gaul and Britain justice was carefully administered, oppressive taxes were abolished or lightened, the inroads of the barbarians were checked. In Italy and Africa the wealthy were plundered or put to death, the virtue of their wives and daughters was exposed to the lust of a brutal tyrant; the soldiers were indulged in every species of licence. During six years Rome groaned beneath the tyranny of its emperor, when at length (312) his own folly gave occasion to its deliverance.

Though Maximian had been driven from Italy by his unworthy son, his death was made the occasion of a display of filial piety, and the statues of Constantine in Italy and Africa were cast down by the orders of Maxentius. Constantine, who was adverse to war, tried the effect of negotiation, but finding that Maxentius, who openly claimed the empire of the West, had assembled a large army for the invasion of Gaul, he resolved to anticipate him and enter Italy, whither he was

* Vict. Epit. xl. 5. Eutrop. x. 4. According to the author *De Mort. Persecut.* (29, 30), his life was spared on this occasion, but having afterwards conspired against Constantine and killed a chamberlain in his stead, he was secretly strangled. Eumenius, however, says (*Panegy.* ix. 20), "*sibi imputet quisquis uti noluit beneficio tuo [Constantine], nec se dignum vita judicavit, cum per te liceret ut viveret.*"

secretly invited by the senate and people of Rome. At the head of about 40,000 veteran troops he crossed the Alps* and descended into the plain of Piedmont (312). The troops of Maxentius numbered 170,000 foot and 18,000 horse, but they were chiefly raw levies, made in Africa, Italy and Sicily, and Maxentius himself was utterly destitute of military talent or experience. The town of Susa (*Segusium*), at the foot of the Alps, closed its gates against Constantine, but it was taken by assault, and the greater part of the garrison slaughtered. On the plain of Turin a strong division of the army of Maxentius opposed the invaders. Its strength consisted in a large body of cavalry arrayed in full armour, after the manner of the Persians†. But the force of this formidable mass was rendered of no avail by the skill of Constantine, who made his troops break their line and allow it to pass through, when it charged, and then close and attack it when broken and divided. The troops of Maxentius soon turned and fled; and as the gates of Turin were closed against them, few of them escaped the sword of the victors. Constantine proceeded without delay to Milan; and nearly all Italy north of the Po declared for his cause.

A brave and skilful officer, named Ruricius Pompeianus, commanded at Verona for Maxentius. As Constantine was advancing against that city he was encountered near Brescia by a large body of cavalry, detached from the army at Verona, but he drove it back with loss, and then sat down before that city. Ruricius, having made all the dispositions necessary for defence, secretly quitted the town, and having with great rapidity collected a sufficient force, advanced to its relief. Constantine drew out his army to give him battle. The engagement commenced in the evening and was continued through the night. Victory finally declared for the Gallic legions; Ruricius was among the slain, and Verona surrendered at discretion. After a short stay at that city, Constantine directed his march for Rome. At Saxa Rubra, close by the memorable Cremera, he found (Oct. 28) the army of Maxentius prepared to give him battle. In person, at the head of his Gallic horse, he charged the cavalry of the enemy and routed it; the greater part of the infantry then turned

* The Cottian Alps, or Mount Cenis.

† Called by the Greeks Cataphracts, by the Latins Clibanarians, from the Persian word. They resembled the heavy cavalry of the middle ages, both horse and man being covered with armour.

and fled, but the brave prætorian cohorts fought and fell where they stood. In the flight Maxentius fell from the Mulvian bridge into the Tiber, and was drowned. His body was found next day, and his head preceded the entrance of Constantine into the city*.

Constantine used his victory with sufficient moderation. The children of Maxentius and his most distinguished adherents were put to death, but the demand of the people for a greater number of victims was steadily rejected. Informers were punished; the exiles were recalled and restored to their estates; a general amnesty was passed; the senate was treated with respect and consideration. At the same time Constantine carried into effect the very measures, the apprehension of which had raised Maxentius to empire. The prætorian guards were broken and dispersed among the legions on the frontiers, and their fortified camp was demolished. The property-tax, which Galerius had projected, and which Maxentius had levied, under the odious name of a free-gift, was made perpetual on the senatorian order, whose number, apparently for this very purpose, was considerably augmented.

Constantine and Licinius.

A.U. 1066-1076. A.D. 313-323.

Constantine remained only two months at Rome, being obliged to set out on his return for Gaul, where the Franks had renewed their incursions. On his way he celebrated at Milan (313) the nuptials of his sister Constantia with Licinius, to whom he had betrothed her previous to the war with Maxentius. Immediately after the nuptial festival the two emperors had to put themselves at the head of their troops; the one to chastise the Germans, and the other to oppose Maximin, who had crossed the Bosphorus, and taken the cities of Byzantium and Heraclea. When Licinius arrived with 30,000 Illyrian veterans, within eighteen miles of this last town, he found his rival supported by 70,000 men of the disciplined troops of the East. Each having vainly tried to seduce the soldiers of the other, they led their forces out to battle (Apr. 30). The advantage was at first on the side of

* This battle is the subject of one of Raffaello's noble frescoes in the Vatican, the finest battle-piece in existence.

numbers, but the European troops, directed by the military skill of their leader, soon asserted their wonted superiority, and a decisive victory crowned their efforts. Maximin fled with the utmost rapidity, never halting till he reached Nicomedia, distant a hundred and sixty miles from the field of battle. He was on his way to Egypt about three months after; when at Tarsus he despaired of his affairs, and took poison, of which he died after much suffering. Licinius used his victory with barbarity. Resolved to remove all possibility of rival claims to the empire of the East, he not only put to death the son and daughter of Maximin, the former of whom was only eight, the latter only seven years of age, but he involved in their fate Severianus, the son of the late emperor Severus, and Candidianus, the natural son of his friend and benefactor Galerius.

But his treatment of the wife and daughter of Diocletian was still more conclusive of the innate inhumanity of his character. After the death of Galerius, Maximin had sought the hand of Valeria. Meeting with a firm refusal, the tyrant gave a loose to his rage; he confiscated her property; he put to the torture her eunuchs and servants; he executed some of her female friends, on false charges of adultery; and he condemned herself and her mother Prisca to exile in a Syrian village. Diocletian sought for permission for them to join him at Salona, but he was now powerless, and his application met with contemptuous neglect. On the death of Maximin the two royal ladies proceeded in disguise to the court of Licinius. They were at first treated with kindness, but the execution of her adopted son Candidianus, who had accompanied her thither, soon convinced Valeria that the tyrant only was changed, and she and her mother fled in a plebeian habit. After wandering about for fifteen months they were discovered at Thessalonica, and were instantly beheaded, and their bodies thrown into the sea.

The number of the emperors was now reduced to two, and it might be supposed that, connected as they had been, both publicly and privately, they would remain at unity. Yet the very year after their becoming brothers-in-law (314), we find them drawing the sword against each other. The occasion was as follows: Constantine gave one of his sisters in marriage to a man of rank named Bassianus, whom he raised, with Licinius' consent, to the dignity of a Cæsar. Italy appears to have been destined for the new Cæsar, but some delay occurring in the appointment, Licinius secretly induced

him to believe that Constantine was merely making a tool of him, and encouraged him to engage in a conspiracy against his benefactor. The plot was, however, speedily discovered; Bassianus was put to death; and as Licinius refused to give up one of the principal conspirators, who had fled to him, and as the statues of Constantine, in the town of Æmona, on the frontiers of Italy, had been thrown down, the emperor of the West entered Illyricum at the head of an army of 20,000 men. Licinius, with 35,000 men, advanced to oppose him; the armies encountered (Oct. 8) near Cibalis on the Save, about fifty miles from Sirmium; the engagement lasted from morning till night, and Licinius retired with a loss of 20,000 men. He hastened to Sirmium to secure his family and treasures, and then breaking down the bridge over the Save at that town, he proceeded to Thrace to collect a new army, and he conferred the title of Cæsar on Valens, the general of the Illyrian frontier. Constantine made no delay in following him, and the emperors again measured their strength on the plain of Mardia in Thrace. The battle lasted all through the day, and was terminated by the night. The victory remained with Constantine, but with so much loss as inclined him to listen to proposals for peace. He made the deposition of Valens an absolute condition, and that luckless prince being deprived of his purple and his life, a treaty was concluded, which gave Pannonia, Dalmatia, Dacia, Macedonia and Greece to the Western empire. It was also agreed that two of the sons of the Western emperor, and the one son of the Eastern monarch, should be raised to the rank of Cæsars.

Peace now continued for above eight years. During that time Constantine was engaged either in beneficial legislation or in defending the frontiers of his empire. His principal war, which he conducted in person, was against the Goths, who (321) invaded the countries south of the Danube. He forced them to purchase a retreat by the surrender of their booty and prisoners; and then repairing the bridge of Trajan, he crossed the river and carried the war into their own country. No longer satisfied with the possession of the larger portion of the Roman empire, he now aimed at wresting the remainder from Licinius. His preparations for war did not escape the observation of that emperor, who forthwith (323) assembled troops and shipping from all parts of his dominions. An army of 150,000 foot and 15,000 horse covered the plains of Hadrianople, and a fleet of three hundred and fifty

triremes occupied the Hellespont. The troops of Constantine (120,000 horse and foot) rendezvoused at Thessalonica; his fleet, which numbered only two hundred small vessels, was assembled in the port of the Piræus. Licinius, who occupied a strong camp on a hill over Hadrianople, did not oppose the passage of the Hebrus by the enemy. The accounts of the engagement which ensued (July 3) are scanty and confused; but it would appear that the veteran troops of the West, evincing their wonted superiority, won their way up the hill, and routed the forces of the East, slaying 34,000 men, and taking their fortified camp. Constantine, who displayed the valour of a soldier and the conduct of a general, received a wound in the thigh: Licinius fled, and shut himself up in Byzantium, whither he was speedily followed by his victorious rival.

Constantine directed that his fleet, which was commanded by his eldest son the Cæsar Crispus, should advance and force the passage of the Hellespont. His admirals selected eighty of their best ships for the purpose; the opposite admiral Amandus opposed them with two hundred. As the narrow sea did not afford sufficient space for the evolutions of so large a number, the advantage, when night terminated the conflict, was on the side of Constantine. Next day Amandus sailed over from the coast of Asia, the wind blowing strongly from the north; but finding the enemy, who lay at Elæus, reinforced by thirty ships, he hesitated to attack. About noon the wind changed and blew so violently from the south, that it drove on the rocks or the shore a hundred and thirty ships of the fleet of Licinius, and caused a loss of 5000 men. Amandus fled with only four ships, and the Hellespont being now open, provisions and supplies of all kinds flowed into the camp of Constantine before Byzantium, and Licinius, deeming that city no longer tenable, passed over with his friends and his treasures to Chalcedon. He there conferred the fatal dignity of Cæsar on Martianus, the principal officer of his palace, and sent him to Lampsacus, to guard the passage of the Hellespont. He himself speedily assembled another army, to oppose the landing of Constantine. That able prince, however, conveyed over a sufficient force in boats, and landed about two hundred stades (twenty-five miles) above Chalcedon. Licinius recalled Martianus with his troops, and an engagement was fought (Sept. 18) on the heights of Chrysopolis (*Scutari*), which ended in the total defeat of

Licinius, with a loss of 25,000 men. He fled to Nicomedia; negotiations were entered into; and Constantine, having given the assurance of his solemn oath to his sister for the security of her husband's life, Licinius laid his purple down at his feet, styling him his king and master. He was admitted to the royal table, and was then sent to Thessalonica, which was fixed on as the place of his residence: Martianus was put to death, and two years after, on the charge of a conspiracy, Licinius was strangled, in violation of the emperor's most solemn engagement.

Constantine.

A.U. 1076-1090. A.D. 323-337.

The Roman empire was thus, after thirty-four years of divided dominion, re-united under one head. Two most important changes immediately succeeded, namely, the foundation of a new capital, and the public establishment of Christianity as the religion of the state; the form of government commenced by Diocletian was also completed. Of these we shall now proceed to treat.

Rome, as we have seen, had long ceased to be an imperial residence. It lay too remote from the banks of the Danube and Euphrates, where the presence of the emperor was most frequently required; Diocletian had therefore fixed his abode in Nicomedia; but the ambition of being the founder of a capital which should bear his own name, and the superior advantages of the site of Byzantium, determined Constantine to raise an imperial city on the peninsula occupied by that town; and in the year following that of the overthrow of Licinius (324) he laid the foundation of Constantinople, as he named it from himself; a city which still exists, and in magnitude and population yields to few in Europe, while in beauty and advantage of situation it is rivaled by none.

It is not necessary that we should describe the situation of this celebrated city, which, like Rome, built on seven hills, grew up from the condition of a colony, and became the capital of empire. In the space of ten years, the numerous workmen employed, by the wealth of the imperial treasury, covered the ground marked out by the founder with all the edifices, sacred, profane and military, required by a magnificent capital,

and the new city was speedily filled with a numerous population. In imitation of Rome it was divided into fourteen regions or wards, and the corn of Egypt was distributed among its poorer citizens; its Hippodrome emulated the Circus, and statues of marble and bronze were brought from all parts to adorn it. The superior rank of the ancient capital, however, was still acknowledged, and the new city was styled its colony.

The civil and military administration of the empire had, as may have been observed, been gradually undergoing a change, and approximating to that of the East. That change was further accelerated by the removal of the seat of government to the new capital, and by the establishment of the prevalent corrupted form of Christianity as the religion of the state. The aspect of the empire under Constantine and his successors may be sketched as follows*.

The court and palace were filled with officers, among whom the eunuchs were conspicuous; they were arranged in orders, the whole forming a sacred *hierarchy*, as it was often styled. All the various ranks were regulated with the most accurate minuteness, and the numerous titles and modes of address which have been the models of those of modern Europe were then devised: such were, *Your Eminence*, *Your Excellency*, *Your illustrious and magnificent Highness*. The great officers had various badges and emblems of their dignities, and were known by their peculiar habits. The whole body of the higher officers and magistrates were divided into three classes; the first, which contained the very highest, being named the Illustrious, the second the Notable (*Spectabiles*), and the third the Most Distinguished (*Clarissimi*†).

The title of *Patrician*, which had long been out of use, was revived by Constantine, but merely as a mark of personal distinction. The dignity was not hereditary, and these new nobles bore no more resemblance to the patricians of ancient Rome than the actual peers of France do to the old *noblesse*. The patricians yielded in dignity to the consuls alone; they were superior to all the great officers of state, and had constant access to the person of the sovereign, whose favourites or ministers they had in general been originally.

* We here shall follow Gibbon, who derived his materials from the Theodosian Code and the *Notitia Imperii*.

† An Italian at the present day will commence a letter with *Chiarissimo Signore*.

The consulate, now an empty dignity, was conferred by the emperor. On New year's day the appointed consuls assumed the ensigns of their dignity at the place which was then the imperial residence. They moved in procession, attended by the principal officers of the state and army, from the palace to the Forum or market-place: they there took their seat on the curule chairs, and manumitted a slave according to ancient usage. Games were celebrated by them, or in their name, in the principal cities of the empire; their names were inscribed in the Fasti, and their names and portraits were engraved on tablets of ivory, adorned with gold, and sent as presents to magistrates and persons of rank. They then retired into private life, for they had no public duties to discharge. Yet the vain and empty honour still continued to be the object of highest ambition.

The office of prætorian prefect had, as we have seen, gradually risen in importance. The prefect, uniting civil and military power, had been in fact what the mayor of the palace afterwards became in France. The suppression of the guards having left him without military command, his office now became purely civil. As by the regulation of Diocletian each prince had its prefect, the number of these officers was four, which number was retained by Constantine. The prefects were named of the East, of Illyricum, of Gaul and of Italy, each of which districts comprised the provinces contained under its title when ruled by the Augusti and the Cæsars. They were at the head of the administration of justice and the finances; they had authority over the provincial governors; there lay an appeal from all inferior tribunals to that of the prætorian prefect, but *his* decision was final. The city of Rome, and afterwards that of Constantinople, had its prefect, who was independent of the prætorian prefect. This officer, who was first appointed by Augustus, had gradually enlarged his power, and he now exercised the ordinary authority and functions of the consuls and prætors in the city, and within a circuit of one hundred miles, and all municipal authority was derived from him.

Beside these great prefectures, the empire, with respect to its civil government, was divided into thirteen great dioceses*, of which the first was administered by the Count (*Comes*) of the East; the governor of that of Egypt was still called the

* Διοικήσεις. The word is now only used in an ecclesiastical sense.

Augustal Prefect; those of the remaining eleven were styled Vicars or Vice-prefects. The rulers of the inferior provinces were in some Proconsuls, in others Consulars or Correctors, or Presidents. Like their superiors, they possessed the administration of justice and of the finances.

The first separation of the civil and military authority of which we read was that made by Augustus in the proconsular provinces. The history of the last two centuries had shown the ill effects of their union in the rebellion of so many governors against the imperial authority, and Constantine was resolved to obviate these evils. For this purpose the command of the troops was permanently separated from the government of the provinces. Two Masters-general (*Magistri militum*) were instituted, one for the cavalry, the other for the infantry of the imperial army. Subordinate commanders, styled Counts (*Comites*) and Dukes (*Duces**), were placed at the head of the troops in the different provinces. A gold belt was the mark of their dignity borne by these officers. The natural consequence of this division of the civil and military power was, that while mutual jealousy prevented the general and the governor from uniting in rebellion, it operated to leave the province exposed to the ravages of the barbarians; so that while it secured the emperor, it injured the empire.

The advantages which had been originally accorded to the prætorian guards were very unwisely extended by Constantine to a large portion of the army. The troops were now distinguished into Palatines and Borderers (*Limitanei*); the former had higher pay and peculiar privileges, and were quartered in the cities and towns of the interior, being only required to take the field on occasions of emergency, while the latter with inferior pay had the task of guarding the frontiers. The legions were increased in number but contracted in their dimensions, and they now bore more resemblance to modern regiments than to the legions of ancient Rome†. The difficulty of procuring recruits in the provinces was nearly insuperable, though a severe conscription, as it may perhaps be termed, was established. Barbarians were therefore constantly taken into the service and even enrolled among the Palatines,

* The Comes or companion of the emperor was the higher in rank, the Dux or Duke was merely a military commander.

† Gibbon, following Pancirolus, estimates the legion at from 1000 to 1500 men.

and they speedily attained the highest military and civil dignities of the empire.

In the palace there were seven principal officers, to whom the rank of Illustrious was conceded. 1. The Chamberlain (*Præpositus cubiculi*), who was always a favourite eunuch; beside his care of the imperial apartments, he attended the emperor on all occasions of state. His influence, it may readily be supposed, was considerable. The counts of the wardrobe and of the table were under the jurisdiction of this officer. 2. The Master of the Offices was the supreme magistrate of the palace. All its officers, civil and military, in all parts of the empire, were subject to his jurisdiction, and to it alone. He had four *Scriniæ* or secretaries'-offices each with its master or chief, and a number of subordinate clerks for carrying on the correspondence of the state. Like our master-general of the ordnance, he had the charge of all the arsenals, and control over the workmen employed in the manufacture of arms. 3. The Quæstor had the task of composing orations in the name of the emperor, which having the force of edicts, he gradually came to be regarded as the original source of jurisprudence. He answered in some sort to the modern chancellor. 4. The Count of the Largesses (*Largitionum*) was at the head of the revenue department, with, of course, a numerous corps of various officers under him. 5. The Count of the Private Estate (*rei privatæ*) had the management of the crown-lands, and the other sources of private income to the emperors. 6. 7. The two Counts of the Domestics, i. e. household-troops, commanded the cavalry and infantry of the body-guards; which consisted of three thousand five hundred men, divided into seven *schools* or companies of five hundred men each. Two of these schools, the one of horse, the other of foot, were named Protectors. They mounted guard in the inner apartments, and they were employed to bear the imperial mandates to the provinces.

While the civil and military departments of the state were thus modeled and regulated, a still more important change was effected by making the Christian religion that of the court and empire. We shall, however, defer our account of the condition and organisation of the church under Constantine and his successors, and only at present notice the conversion of that emperor, and the motives in which it originated.

Constantius, without being a Christian, had from motives of justice and humanity treated his subjects of that faith with

indulgence. His example was followed by his son, and the Christians, comparing his moderation with the persecuting spirit of Galerius and his colleagues, were naturally disposed to favour him. Constantine, however, was still a polytheist, and his principal object of worship was the sun-god, Apollo. At the same time with the compliant spirit of polytheism he held the God of the Christians and the author of their faith in respect and reverence. After the defeat and death of Maxentius (313), Constantine and Licinius issued at Milan an edict of general toleration, restoring at the same time to the Christians the lands and churches of which they had been deprived. To the terms of this edict Constantine firmly adhered, and he was probably becoming daily more convinced of the superiority of the Christian religion and of the advantage that might result from his embracing it; while Licinius speedily violated it, and partially renewed the persecution. In the second war between these emperors (324) the cross appeared on the banner of Constantine, and his victory was followed by the issue of circular letters announcing his own conversion, and inviting his subjects to follow his example. The call of a powerful monarch was not likely to be unheeded; the Christian faith rapidly spread; offices of trust, profit and honour were bestowed almost exclusively on Christians; bishops thronged the court; paganism was in every way discouraged, and Christianity finally triumphed over its ancient enemy.

The conversion of Constantine may have been, and probably was, sincere. But in all such cases motives of policy are apt to concur with higher ones, and often to exercise a superior influence. Constantine must have seen that the Christians, if not the most numerous, were the best united and organised, and consequently the most powerful, body in the empire. He could not be blind to the great superiority of the Christian morality over that of heathenism, and as a wise sovereign he must have seen that it was his interest to promote its diffusion. The doctrine of passive obedience held by the Christians of that time must have proved most grateful to the ears of a monarch, and the zeal in his cause and the loyalty shown by the Christians cannot have been wholly without effect on his mind. These various motives may then have given force to the reasonings of the Christian divines, but we are assured that the efficient cause of the conversion of the emperor was a miracle.

According to the biographer of this emperor, the learned bishop Eusebius, as Constantine was on his march against Maxentius, there appeared one day in the sight of himself and his whole army, a luminous cross above the sun in the noon-day sky, bearing inscribed on it the words, "By this conquer," (*Hac vince*) and in the following night Christ himself stood in a dream before the emperor bearing a similar cross, and directed him to frame a standard of that form, which would assure him of victory against Maxentius. The standard was accordingly framed, and under the name of Labarum, a word of unknown origin, it became the future banner of the empire. Its form was that of a long pike with a transverse bar, from which hung a piece of silk adorned with the images of the monarch and his children. On the top of the pike was a wreath of gold enclosing the monogram of the name of Christ and the sign of the cross. The care of the Labarum was always committed to fifty soldiers of approved valour and fidelity.

This legend is related by Eusebius on the authority of Constantine himself; but his narrative did not appear till after the death of the emperor; and in his earlier work, the Ecclesiastical History, he is silent respecting it. Another contemporary* mentions only a dream in which Constantine was directed on the night before the battle with Maxentius to inscribe the sacred monogram on the shields of his soldiers; and adds, that his obedience was rewarded with victory. We take not on us to decide how much of fiction or of error there may be in the legend; but that no actual miracle was wrought, we venture to affirm without hesitation, in accordance with our fixed opinions on the subject.

We now return to the course of our historic narrative. A dark transaction, which has fixed an indelible stain on the memory of Constantine, is the first that meets our view. We have already seen that before his marriage with the daughter of Maximian, he had had a son by his first wife. This youth, named Crispus, was reared under the charge of the pious, learned and eloquent Lactantius. Christian writers and historians are unanimous in the testimony which they bear to the virtues of the heir-apparent to the empire. It is possible that, as is asserted, Crispus may have been jealous of the partiality shown by the emperor to the children of his second

* The author of the treatise *De Mortibus Persecutorum*.

marriage, one of whom, Constantius, had been sent with the title of Cæsar to administer the government of Gaul, while he himself was detained in inactivity at court. He may also, as is said, have given vent to his feelings in imprudent language; and any one at all acquainted with the texture of courts in general, can easily suppose that in the palace of a despotic prince there was no lack of wretches who would seek to advance their own interest by exciting enmity between the father and the son. An edict of Constantine's, issued toward the end of the year 325, shows that he believed or feigned that a secret conspiracy had been formed against him and in favour of Crispus. Whatever his suspicions of his son or his designs against him may have been, they were closely concealed, and Crispus in the following year (326) accompanied his father to Rome, when he proceeded thither to celebrate the twentieth year of his reign. In the midst of the festival the prince was arrested; after a short private examination, or possibly no examination at all, he was sent under a strong guard to Pola in Istria, where shortly after he was put to death by poison, or by the hand of the executioner. His fate was shared by the son of the late emperor Licinius.

When a biographer passes in silence over any important action of his hero, we may be certain that a minute and exact inquiry, and a sifting of all the circumstances, has convinced him that it is incapable of bearing exposure to the light, and that no ingenuity can avail to extenuate, much less excuse it. On this principle we hold the profound silence of Eusebius on this mysterious transaction to be conclusive of the guilt of Constantine, and the innocence of Crispus; and at the same time subversive of that prelate's claim to truth and integrity as a historian.

The later Greeks, however, have fabled that Constantine discovered his error, mourned and repented it, and erected a golden statue bearing the inscription, *To my son whom I unjustly condemned*. A more ancient account said that the story of Phædra and Hippolytus was renewed in the imperial palace, and that the death of Crispus was caused by the disappointed lust of Fausta. It is added, that the emperor's mother Helena, enraged at the fate of her innocent grandson, caused Fausta to be closely watched, and it being discovered that she carried on an adulterous intercourse with a slave belonging to the stables, she was suffocated by order of her

husband in a bath, made more than usually hot for the purpose*. The deaths of Crispus, Licinius, and Fausta were followed by those of many of the emperor's friends on various charges.

By Fausta the emperor had had three sons, named Constantine, Constantius and Constans; his elder half-brother Julius Constantius had, beside other children, two sons named Gallus and Julian; and Dalmatius another half-brother, was the father of two princes, Dalmatius and Hannibalianus. From some motive which has not been assigned, Constantine resolved to associate the two last-named nephews with his own sons in the empire, placing the former, as a Cæsar, on an equality with them; and giving the latter the new title of Nobilissimus, and even, as it would appear, that of King, which we find used of him alone.

A war between the Goths and Sarmatians engaged the attention of Constantine in the latter years of his reign. Policy causing him to take the part of the latter, the former crossed the Danube and laid Mœsia waste (331). The emperor took the field in person, but his troops fled from before them, and he was obliged to retire. In the following year (332), however, the imperial troops led by the Cæsar Constantius retrieved their fame. The Goths were forced to recross the Danube and to sue for peace. The Sarmatians having shown the usual levity and ingratitude of barbarians, Constantine left them to their fate. Vanquished in battle by the Goths, they armed their slaves, and by their aid expelled the invaders from their territory; but the slaves turned their arms against their masters, drove them out of the country, and held it under the name of Limigantes.

Nothing occurred to disturb the tranquillity of the empire during the remaining years of the reign of Constantine. He breathed his last on the 22nd of May, 337, in the palace of Aquirion at Nicomedia, in the sixty-fifth year of his age, after a prosperous reign of thirty years and ten months. His corpse was removed to Constantinople, where it was placed on a golden bed in an illuminated apartment of the palace; and each day the principal officers of state approached it and offered their homage, as if to the living emperor. It was at

* Zosimus, Philostorgius and others assert that Fausta was put to death. Yet, as Gibbon observes, in a monody on her son, the younger Constantine, she is said to have lived to deplore his fate.

length committed to the tomb with all fitting ceremony and magnificence.

The merits and virtues of the emperor Constantine were so numerous and conspicuous, that were it not for the deaths of his son and nephew and friends, his name would be without any considerable blemish. It is, however, objected to him, that in his latter years he adopted a style of dress and manners which exhibited more of Asiatic effeminacy than of Roman dignity. He is also charged with lavishing on needless and expensive buildings, the money wrung from his subjects by oppressive taxation, and of overlooking, if not encouraging, the rapacity of his friends and favorites. Like so many of those who have attained to empire by their own merits and talents, Constantine is more to be esteemed in the early than in the later years of his reign.

It is remarkable that Constantine—though he openly professed the Christian religion, convened and presided at a general council of the church, and enjoyed nearly all the privileges of the initiated order of the faithful—remained all through his reign in the humble rank of a catechumen, and deferred receiving the sacrament of baptism till he discerned the certain symptoms of the approach of his dissolution. The superstition in which this practice originated has already been explained; and it derogates from the wisdom or knowledge of the Nicene Fathers to know that they tacitly at least sanctioned a usage so detrimental to true religion.

CHAPTER III.*

CONSTANTINE II. CONSTANTIUS. CONSTANS.

A.U. 1090-1114. A.D. 337-361.

Slaughter of the imperial family.—Persian war.—Deaths of Constantine and Constans.—Magentius.—Gallus.—Julian.—Silvanus.—Court of Constantius.—War with the Limigantes.—Persian war.—Julian in Gaul.—Battle of Strasburg.—Julian proclaimed emperor.—His march from Gaul.—Death of Constantius.

Constantine II., Constantius, Constans.

A.U. 1090-1103. A.D. 337-350.

THE tomb had not received the mortal remains of the great Constantine, when a plot was laid to destroy some of the objects of his regard. The troops were induced, we are not informed by whom or by what means, to declare that none but the sons of the late monarch should rule over his empire; and Dalmatius and Hannibalianus were seized and placed under custody, till Constantius, to whom the charge of the funeral had been committed, should arrive in the capital. When this prince came he pledged his oath to his kinsmen for their safety; but ere long a false charge was made against them, and the soldiers became clamorous for their death. A general massacre of the imperial family ensued, in which two uncles and seven cousins of Constantius, and with them Optatus, the husband of his aunt, perished. Their fate was shared by the prefect Ablavius, the minister and favorite of the late emperor. Of the whole imperial family there only remained the three emperors and Gallus and Julian, the sons of Julius Constantius.

In the following month of September, the three brothers had a personal interview, in which a new arrangement of the empire was concluded; by which Constantine, as the eldest, was conceded a superiority in rank and the possession of the eastern capital.

The eastern frontier gave Constantius occupation for some years. Sapor II. king of Persia, a prince of great energy and enterprise, burned to recover the provinces which had been ceded to Galerius, but dread of the power and genius

* Authorities: Zozimus, Ammianus Marcellinus, the Epitomators, and the Ecclesiastical Historians.

of Constantine had held him in check. As soon, however, as the empire fell into the hands of inexperienced young princes, he poured his troops into Mesopotamia, and for some years the Roman annals have only to tell of armies defeated, and towns besieged or taken by the Persian monarch. In the battle of Singara (348) the Roman legions routed the troops of Persia, and drove them to their camp. As the night was at hand, Constantius, who commanded in person, sought to restrain his men, and defer the attack till the light of morn; but heedless of the commands of their prince, the soldiers eager for prey pressed on, and forcing the camp, spread themselves all over it in search of plunder. In the dead of the night, Sapor, who had posted his troops on the adjacent hills, led them to the attack of the scattered and unprepared enemies, and the Romans were routed with immense slaughter. The survivors escaped with the utmost difficulty, and endured intolerable hardships in their retreat. This is said to have been the ninth victory over the troops of Rome achieved by the arms of Sapor. But though thus successful in the field, he was unable to carry the important city of Nisibis. Thrice did he lead his forces under its walls, and thrice did he employ in vain the valour of his soldiers and the arts of his engineers; the gallant city still remained unsubdued.

While Constantius was thus occupied in the East, Constans had become sole ruler in the West. For Constantine having required that Constans should resign Africa to him, and being irritated by the insincerity displayed by that prince in the negotiation, made a sudden irruption into his dominions (340); but in the neighbourhood of Aquileia he came to an engagement with the generals of Constans, and being drawn into an ambush, himself and all those about him were slain. Constans then took possession of the whole of his dominions, refusing to give any share to his remaining brother, who does not, however, appear to have claimed it.

For about ten years Constans exercised every kind of oppression over his subjects. His hours were devoted to the chase, and to other pleasures of a less innocent nature. At length (350) a conspiracy was formed against him by Magnentius, a Frank, but born in Gaul, who commanded the Jovian and Herculan guards. Marcellinus, the treasurer, shared in the conspiracy; and when the court was at Autun, and the emperor was taking the pleasures of the chase in the adjoining forest, he gave, under the pretext of celebrating

his son's birthday, a magnificent entertainment, to which were invited the principal officers of the army. The festival was prolonged till after midnight, when Magnentius withdrew for a little time and then re-appeared clad in the imperial habit. Those in the secret instantly saluted him emperor, and the remainder, taken by surprise, were induced to join in the acclamation. Promises and money were liberally scattered, and both the soldiery and the people declared for Magnentius. It was hoped that they might be able to surprise Constans on his return from the chase, but he got timely information and fled for Spain. He was, however, overtaken by those despatched in pursuit of him, at a town named Helena (*Elne*) at the foot of the Pyrenees, dragged from a church to which he had fled for refuge, and put to death.

Constantius.

A.U. 1103-1114. A.D. 350-361.

The whole of the West, with the exception of Illyricum, yielded obedience to Magnentius. The troops of that country were commanded by Vetranio, an aged general of simple and upright manners, but so illiterate as to be ignorant of even reading and writing. At first he professed allegiance to the remaining son of Constantine, but at length he yielded to the desires of his legions and those of the princess Constantina, the daughter of Constantine, and widow of Hannibalianus, who thus, perhaps, sought to obtain vengeance for her husband and to recover her own power. He consented to accept of empire; and Constantina with her own hand placed the diadem on his head. Vetranio soon found it expedient to accept of the proffered alliance of Magnentius.

An opportune incursion of the Massagetans into the northern part of his dominions having just at this time called Sapor away from the third siege of Nisibis, Constantius found himself at leisure to attend to the affairs of the West. Leaving a sufficient force with his generals he set out for Europe to avenge the murder of his brother. At Heraclea, in Thrace, he was met by an embassy from the two emperors of the West, headed by Marcellinus. It was proposed that he should acknowledge them, marry the daughter of Magnentius, and give Constantina in marriage to that prince. Next day he gave

his reply : the shade of the great Constantine embracing the corpse of his murdered brother, had, he said, appeared to him in the night, bidden him not to despair of the republic, and assured him of victory. He dismissed one of the ambassadors, put the others in irons as traitors, and then pursued his march.

His conduct toward Vetranio was artful and politic. While he menaced Magnentius with vengeance as a traitor, he acknowledged the Illyrian Augustus as a colleague, and finally induced him to unite with him against the usurper. It was agreed that the two emperors and their armies should meet at the town of Sardica. The troops of Vetranio were far superior both in number and strength to those of the emperor of the East; but the reliance of Constantius was on the promises that he had lavished on them, by which most of both officers and men had been secretly gained to his side. The united armies were assembled (Dec. 25), in a large plain near the city, and the two emperors ascended the tribunal to address them. Constantius spoke the first. He inveighed against Magnentius; he spoke of the glories of Constantine, and of their oaths of fidelity to him. Those who were prepared for the purpose and stood about the tribunal, then cried out that they would have no spurious emperors, and would only serve under the son of Constantine, and the cry was repeated through all the ranks. Vetranio, thus abandoned by his own troops, took off his diadem, and fell at the feet of his imperial colleague. Constantius raised him and promised him safety. The city of Prusa in Bithynia, with an ample revenue, was assigned for the place of his abode, and he there passed the remaining six years of his life in ease and tranquillity.

Early in the spring (351), Magnentius took the field with a large army. The advantages were on his side throughout the summer, and Constantius, who shunned to meet him in the field, found it necessary to offer him terms of peace. But the haughtiness of the usurper, who required him to resign his purple, promising him life on that humiliating condition, put an end to all hopes of accommodation, and Constantius resolved to trust to Heaven, and conquer or fall with honour. Magnentius then advanced and made an attempt on the town of Mursa (*Essek*), situated on the river Drave. Constantius led his troops to its defence, and the two armies encountered (Sept. 28) on the plain in which the city stands. Leaving the command with his generals, Constantius retired to an adjoining church, where he passed the day in prayer. The

engagement lasted till night, and the victory of the imperial troops, chiefly owing to the heavy cataphract cavalry, was complete. The number of men slain in the battle is said to have been 54,000, of whom more than one-half fell on the side of the victors. Magnentius escaped with difficulty from the emperor's light horse, who chased him to the foot of the Julian Alps.

The winter passed away in inaction, and when spring came (352) Magnentius fixed his abode at Aquileia, in order to oppose the further advance of the imperial troops; but he soon found it necessary, in consequence of the defection of the troops and people of Italy, to abandon that position and retire into Gaul. The cause of this defection was the cruelty used by his ministers, on the occasion of the suppression of an insurrection at Rome, where a youth named Nepotianus, the son of Eutropia, one of the sisters of the great Constantine, had armed a band of slaves and gladiators, and assumed the purple. Himself, his mother, and all connected with the family of Constantine, were put to death; all parts of the city were filled with blood, and terror everywhere prevailed. Communications were, therefore, opened with Constantius after the battle of Mursa, and all Italy finally declared in his favour. It was now, therefore, the turn of Magnentius to sue. He sent some bishops to Constantius, offering to resign the purple, and to serve him faithfully; but the emperor would listen to no proposals on the part of the assassin, though he offered pardon to all who would abandon him. The imperial fleet had meantime acquired the possession of Africa and Spain, and landed an army in the latter country, which entered Gaul and advanced toward Lyons, where Magnentius was residing. The oppressions exercised by this tyrant in order to obtain money and supplies from the cities of Gaul, at length drove the people to desperation, and a revolt commenced at Treves, where the gates were shut against his brother Decentius, whom he had made an Augustus. The Germans, with whom Constantius had formed an alliance, passed the Rhine and besieged Decentius in Sens. The imperial troops at length forced the passage of the Cottian Alps, and a battle was fought at a place named Mount Seleucus, in which the usurper was totally defeated. He fled to Lyons, where finding that his soldiers were preparing to seize and surrender him, he anticipated their design by falling on his sword. Decentius strangled himself when he heard of his brother's

death, and Constantius now remained sole master of the Roman world.

Of the male line of Constantine there were now only the emperor himself and his cousins, Gallus and Julian, remaining. These youths, after the massacre of their family, had been placed in different cities of Asia, where they were surrounded and guarded by persons devoted to the emperor; but they were treated with care and respect, and the utmost attention was bestowed on their education. At length (351), when the emperor was preparing to avenge the murder of his last remaining brother, he conferred on Gallus, then in his twenty-fifth year, the dignity of Cæsar, committed to him the government of the East, and gave him in marriage the princess Constantina. The new Cæsar fixed his abode at Antioch.

Gallus was in every way unfit to rule. He had no experience of the world, and his natural temper was violent and tyrannic. Had he been united to a woman of mild and amiable manners, his innate ferocity might perhaps have been mitigated; but Constantina was one who actually delighted in blood, and instead of restraining, she stimulated her husband to deeds of cruelty. The apartments of the palace were filled with the implements of death and torture; all places, both public and private, were beset with informers; no man's life was secure; and a general gloom pervaded the city.

While Constantius was engaged in the contest for his empire, he had not leisure to attend to the proceedings of his Cæsar: at length, however (354), he came to the resolution of depriving him of his rank or of removing him to Gaul; and on the occasion of the massacre of a nobleman named Theophilus, by the populace of Antioch, in a time of scarcity, with the connivance of Gallus, he sent the prefect Domitian with directions to prevail, by gentle means, if possible, on Gallus to proceed to Italy; for he feared to attack him openly, lest he should assert his independence. But Domitian, on arriving at Antioch, instead of waiting on Gallus, as he should have done, passed by the palace-gate, and on the pretext of illness, remained at his own house for some days. When at last he condescended to visit the Cæsar, he roughly ordered him to set out for Italy at once, threatening, in case of his refusal, to stop the supply of provisions to the palace. He then rose and went away, and would not appear any more before the Cæsar, though often summoned. This conduct would have provoked a much meeker temper than that of Gallus, who

immediately set a guard on the house of the prefect. The quæstor, Montius, then called together the principal officers of the guards, and dilating on what had occurred, hinted that Gallus was about to rebel. When this reached the ears of the Cæsar, he assembled the soldiers and called on them to protect him. They instantly seized Montius, who was an infirm old man, and tying his legs with ropes, dragged him to the abode of Domitian, whom they likewise bound, and then dragged them both through the streets till they were dead, and after insulting their bodies in a barbarous manner, flung them into the river. The cruelty of Gallus now redoubled, and guilty and innocent suffered alike.

Constantius and his council were perplexed how to act, but they finally resolved to proceed with artifice, and draw the Cæsar into their toils gently. The emperor wrote to him in most affectionate terms, entreating him to come and assist him in managing the arduous affairs of the West: in like manner he wrote to his sister, expressing a most anxious desire to see her. Constantina accordingly set out for Europe, but on the way she fell sick, and died at a town in Bithynia. As it was, chiefly on her influence with her brother that Gallus relied for his safety, her death threw him into the utmost perplexity. While he was hesitating, Scudilo a tribune of the guards arrived, a man who under the guise of martial roughness and frankness concealed a most artful and insinuating character, and by his representations he was induced to set out for Europe. At Constantinople he imprudently took on him to bestow a crown on the victor in a chariot-race, which assumption of imperial power, as it was deemed, greatly contributed to exasperate the emperor against him. The soldiers were removed from all the towns through which he was to pass, lest they should declare for him; a needful precaution, as it would appear, for when he reached Hadrianople the Thebæan legions which lay in that neighbourhood sent to offer him their services; but their deputies were unable to obtain access to him, for he was surrounded by persons devoted to the court, who had been sent to occupy all the places in his establishment. Letters now reached him requiring his immediate presence at court, and he was obliged to set out with only a few attendants, and to travel post with the utmost speed. On reaching the town of Petobio (*Pettau*) on the Drave, he was lodged in a palace without the walls, and toward evening it was surrounded with soldiers, and their commander Barbatip

entered and stripped the Cæsar of his royal dress, putting ordinary raiment upon him, and then with oaths assuring him of safety, made him arise and enter a common carriage, in which he was conveyed to a place near Pola in Istria, which had been the scene of the last sufferings of the unhappy Crispus. After being kept a short time in suspense, and having undergone an examination respecting his conduct in the East, in which he confessed his criminal acts, but cast the entire blame of them on his wife, he was secretly beheaded in prison.

The imperial family was thus reduced to the emperor himself and his cousin Julian. The eunuchs, who were all-powerful in the palace, laboured hard for the destruction of this prince, who had been brought to the court of Milan, and charges of treason were devised against him; but though he easily refuted all that his enemies could allege, his innocence would probably have availed him little against the arts and the influence of those who dreaded him as his brother's avenger, had he not found a powerful protectress in the empress Eusebia, a woman of considerable beauty and merit, who exercised great power over the mind of her husband. Julian was at length (355) permitted to retire to Athens, to pursue the literary studies in which he delighted. His abode in that seat of learning was, however, but of brief duration, for Constantius, finding himself totally unequal to the sole direction of the multitudinous affairs of the empire, menaced on all its frontiers by restless and powerful enemies, yielded to the arguments and entreaties of the empress, who represented to him that Gallus and Julian had differed in character as much as the sons of Vespasian, and that from the mild, gentle temper of the latter he might expect to meet with nothing but gratitude and obedience. She thus induced him to consent to associate Julian in the empire, and an order was despatched for that prince to return immediately to court. Julian quitted Athens with deep and unfeigned regret. He was kindly received at Milan; the only condition exacted from him was a marriage with the emperor's sister Helena, a princess some years his senior; and on the day in which he entered his twenty-fifth year (Nov. 6), Constantius, in the presence and amid the acclamations of the army, bestowed on him the dignity of Cæsar. He was immediately after sent to take the command in Gaul.

This country had lately been the scene of rebellion, and this circumstance had probably contributed to the elevation

of Julian. Silvanus, one of those German officers who were now so numerous in the Roman service, had by his opportune desertion just before the battle of Mursa, contributed not a little to the victory of Constantius. The command of the imperial infantry was his reward, and he enjoyed the favour of his sovereign, which, however, only exposed him the more to the hostility of the favorites, one of whom, Arbetio, as the surest means of destroying him, induced the emperor to give him the charge of delivering Gaul from the depredations of the Germans. Silvanus was not long in that province, when an agent, selected for the purpose, applied to him for letters of recommendation to his friends at court. These he unsuspectingly gave, and they were conveyed to his enemies, who erasing all but the signature, filled them with language calling on his friends to aid his designs on the empire. The matter was then laid before the emperor in council, and orders were given to arrest the persons to whom the letters were addressed. Malaric, however, the commander of the foreign guards, and Silvanus' countryman, aided by his brother-officers, warmly asserted the innocence of the absent general, and at his instance a new inquiry was instituted, in which the forgery was detected. The discovery, however, came too late; Silvanus, indignant at the treatment he had received, and seeing no other prospect of security, had assumed the purple at Cologne. Treachery was then employed against him, and Ursinus, a general who had lately distinguished himself so much in the defence of the East, that fear of his doing what Silvanus had now done had caused his recal, sullied his fame by becoming the instrument. He set out for Gaul with a few of his friends under the pretence of avenging the injuries which he had received at court, and joined the usurper. He was received with kindness and confidence, which he repaid by seducing some of the foreign troops, and causing Silvanus to be murdered after a brief reign of twenty-eight days. The troops then returned to their allegiance.

The court of Constantius was one in which all the vices which distinguish those of the East flourished in luxuriance. There was in it no place for virtue and integrity; the vile race of eunuchs (for such the history of all ages proves them to be) were so powerful, that as the historian sarcastically observes, Constantius had a good deal of influence with the chief of them, the chamberlain Eusebius. Their rapacity knew no bounds; justice and the honours of the state were set up to

sale, the complaints of the injured were intercepted, the honourable and the independent were secretly undermined or openly assailed. But the eunuchs were not the sole authors of evil; we find among the pests of the court the general Arbeto and the notary Paulus, this last a crafty Spaniard surnamed Catena, from his skill in entangling destined victims in the meshes of dangerous subtleties. There were many others whose names it boots not to record. The character of the emperor, jealous of his dignity, and barbarously cruel to all who were even suspected of encroaching on it, gave effect to the arts of these men, and few were safe from their machinations.

While Constantius remained in Italy, he paid a visit to the ancient capital (Apr. 28, 357). He entered it in a triumphal procession, visited and admired all its venerable monuments, and gave orders for the transportation thither of an obelisk from Egypt to commemorate his abode at Rome. After a stay of only thirty days, he quitted it, never again to return.

The cause of his so speedy departure was the invasion of the Illyrian provinces by their ancient devastators, the Quadians and their allies. He took the field in person against them, cut their armies to pieces, ravaged their country far and wide, and compelled them to sue for peace. At this time also he listened to the entreaties of the Sarmatians, and consented to turn his arms against their rebellious slaves. On his approach, the Limigantes offered to pay an annual tribute and to furnish recruits for the army, but they expressed their determination not to quit their country. When, however, they found themselves attacked on different sides by the Roman legions, their former masters, and the Gothic Taifalans, their dwellings fired and their country ravaged in all directions, their spirit abated, and they came with their wives and children to the Roman camp, and consented to remove whithersoever it should please the emperor to appoint their abode. Lands were accordingly assigned them at some distance from the river, and the war being thus to all appearance terminated, Constantius retired to Sirmium for the winter. Early, however, in the following year (359), intelligence that the Limigantes had returned, and were about to cross the Danube and ravage the provinces, obliged him again to take the field. When he reached the banks of the river, the Limigantes were quite submissive, craved permission to be allowed to pass over and state their grievances, and to have lands assigned them within the Roman frontiers where they might dwell as peace-

ful subjects. Constantius gave a cheerful consent; his tribunal was erected on a mound near the river; the Limigantes surrounded it; he stood up, and was preparing to address them, when one of them flung his shoe at the tribunal and raised their war-cry, *Marha marha*. Instantly a rush to the tribunal was made by the multitude, the emperor had only time to mount a fleet horse and fly to the camp, his guards were cut to pieces, and the tribunal was destroyed. But when the Roman troops learned the danger to which their emperor had been exposed, they hastened to take vengeance on the traitors, and they speedily massacred the entire multitude of the Limigantes. For his successes against this people Constantius took the title of Sarmaticus.

The war on the Illyrian frontier being thus terminated, the emperor found it necessary to proceed to the East, where Sapor had once more crossed the Tigris and poured his troops over the plains of Mesopotamia. The director of the campaign was a Roman subject named Antoninus, who had been forced to seek at the court of Persia a refuge from oppression. His plan was to neglect the fortresses, push on for the Euphrates, and think only of the conquest and plunder of Antioch; but the country was destroyed by the Romans, and the river happening to swell at this time could not be passed at the usual places. The march of the Persian army was therefore directed toward the head of the stream, but as it was passing under the walls of the strong city of Amida, Sapor halted and summoned it to surrender. A dart flung from the walls chanced to graze his tiara, and the haughty despot, heedless of the remonstrances of his ministers, resolved to avenge the insult by the destruction of the city. His army, which counted one hundred thousand men, invested it after a general assault had been tried and failed. The works of the besiegers were carried on under the direction of the Roman deserters, and, after a gallant defence of seventy-three days, the city was taken by storm, and all but those who had contrived to escape by the gate most remote from the point of attack were ruthlessly massacred. But the Persians purchased their conquest with the loss of nearly the third part of their host.

The capture of Amida terminated the campaign. In the following spring (360) Sapor again crossed the Tigris. He besieged and took the cities of Singara and Bezabde; the former of which he dismantled as it lay in a sandy plain, but

in the latter, which occupied a peninsula on the Tigris, he placed a strong garrison. Having failed in an attempt on Virtha, a strong fortress of the independent Arabs, he led his troops back to Persia. In the autumn, Constantius, who had at length arrived in the East, passed the Euphrates, and having assembled his troops at Edessa and wept over the ruins of Amida, advanced to attempt the recovery of Bezabde; but all his efforts to take it having failed and the weather becoming tempestuous, he abandoned the siege and returned to Antioch for the winter.

It is now time that we should direct our attention to the conduct of the Cæsar Julian in his administration of the Gallic provinces. The Franks and Alemans had been of late almost the undisputed masters of the country to an extent far westward of the Rhine; forty-five cities, among which were those bearing the modern names of Tongres, Treves, Worms, Spire and Strasburg, beside numerous towns and villages, had been pillaged or burnt by them; and the Cæsar received at Turin, on his road, the intelligence of the capture of the flourishing colony of Cologne. He passed the winter at Vienne, and early in the summer (356) he proceeded to Autun, which had lately gallantly repelled an attack of the Barbarians. He thence made his way through a country occupied by the enemy to Rheims, where he had ordered his troops to assemble. After two encounters with the Alemans, in one of which he was successful, he penetrated to the Rhine, and having surveyed the ruins of Cologne and formed a just conception of the difficulties he would have to encounter, he led his troops back to their winter quarters in Gaul. He fixed his own abode in the city of Sens, where for thirty days he was besieged by the Alemans; but he defended the town with skill and courage, and the barbarians were forced to retire.

Julian himself, in his extant writings, speaks slightly of his first campaign. It was the initiation of a retired student in the affairs of actual life; and the love of honest fame and the lessons of solid wisdom which he had derived from the works of those men of mighty intellect who had flourished in ancient Greece, combined with his natural talent, soon enabled him to acquire the character of an able general. His next campaign therefore proved a glorious one. A principal cause of his success was the removal of the impediments which the eunuchs had prepared for him in his own army,

where they had caused the command of the cavalry to be given to Marcellus, a man who seemed to think his only duty to be that of thwarting the Cæsar. As, however, though near at hand, he had not come to his aid when he ran such risk at Sens, he was, on Julian's complaint, supported probably by the empress, removed from his command, and an officer named Severus, of a very different character, sent in his stead. Marcellus proceeded to the court, and was commencing a course of insinuations against the loyalty of Julian, when the prince's chamberlain Eutherius, who had been despatched for the purpose, arrived. This noble-minded eunuch* demanded an audience of the emperor, and when admitted he boldly asserted the innocence of his master and proved the culpable conduct of Marcellus, who was obliged to retire in disgrace to his native country, Pannonia.

Julian, now master of his actions, prepared to commence operations (357). The plan of the campaign was, that while he should advance from Rheims on the one side with the troops of Gaul, Barbatio the general of the imperial infantry should lead an army of thirty thousand men from Italy and cross the Rhine near Basil, so that the Alemans attacked on both sides should be forced to abandon the left bank of the river. Julian's first care was to restore the fortifications of the city of Saverne in the heart of the country occupied by the enemy; but while he was thus engaged, a large body of the Alemans passed unobserved between the two Roman armies, and made an attempt on the city of Lyons, which having failed, they fell to plundering the surrounding country. Julian immediately sent bodies of horse to occupy the roads by which they must return, and the booty was thus recovered and all the plunderers cut to pieces, except those who were permitted to pass unmolested under the very ramparts of Barbatio's camp. When Julian soon after, being anxious to drive the barbarians out of the islands which they occupied in the Rhine, applied to Barbatio for seven of the boats which he had collected to form a bridge over

* Ammianus (xvi. 7.) is justly lavish in his praise of this excellent man. He commences by observing that what he said would hardly be credited, "*ea re quod si Numa Pompilius vel Socrates bona quædam dicerent de spadone, dictisque religionum adderent fidem, a veritate descivisse arguerentur.* Sed inter vepres rosæ nascuntur, et inter feras nonnullæ mitescunt."

that stream, the latter forthwith burnt the whole of them sooner than aid his operations. Julian, however, by means of the shallows in the river caused by the summer-heat, passed over a body of troops, and destroyed or expelled the barbarians. He then set his troops to restore the fortifications of the town of Zabern (*Tabernæ*); and while they were thus engaged, Barbatio, as a further means of injuring Julian, seized the corn provided for them, consumed a part of it, and burned the remainder. Shortly after he was suddenly fallen on by the barbarians, defeated and driven to Basil. Then, as if he had gained a victory, he put his troops into winter-quarters, and returned to court to follow his usual course of maligning the Cæsar.

Chnodomar, the Alemanic king, supported by six other kings and ten princes of royal lineage, now prepared to attack the Cæsar, whose forces, as he learned from a deserter, were, by the departure of Barbatio, reduced to thirteen thousand men. The Germans occupied three days and nights in passing the Rhine, and an army of thirty-five thousand of their warriors was thus assembled at Strasburg (*Argentoratum*). Julian, who was encamped at a distance of twenty-one miles from that place, advanced to attack them; his troops being arranged in two divisions, the one of horse, the other of foot. It was so late in the day when they came in view of the enemy, that he wished to defer the attack till the morning; but the impatience of his troops was not to be restrained. Placing himself, therefore, at the head of his guards, he went round encouraging the men to fight valiantly. The battle then began; the Roman cavalry which was on the right fought at first in a manner worthy of its fame; but as the Germans had mingled footmen through their cavalry, the heavy cuirassiers were thrown into confusion and retreated. Julian immediately rode up and rallied them, and the combat of cavalry was renewed. The Roman infantry, led by Severus, though vigorously opposed, was at length completely successful; and the barbarians quitted the field with a loss of six thousand men, and many more were drowned in the Rhine, or slain by the darts of their pursuers as they were swimming across. Chnodomar himself was taken while attempting to escape and conducted to the Cæsar, by whom he was treated with kindness. He was afterwards sent to the emperor, who assigned him a residence at Rome, where

he ended his days. In this glorious and important victory the loss of the Romans had been only four tribunes and two hundred and forty-three men.

Julian resolved to follow up his success, passed the Rhine near Mentz, and advanced for a space of ten miles into the hostile territory, wasting the lands and burning the houses. The impediment of a deep dark forest occupied by the concealed bands of the Germans, and the appearance of the snow which now began to cover the ground, it being past the time of the autumnal equinox, warning him of the imprudence of any further advance, he decided to repossess the river. Before, however, he quitted the soil of Germany, he repaired and garrisoned a fortress which Trajan had erected, and having granted the Alemans a truce for ten months, he departed.

The following summer (358) Julian turned his arms against the Franks. By the celerity of his movements he anticipated all resistance, and their tribes submitted to such terms as he thought fit to dictate. Then, as the truce with the Alemans had expired, he crossed the Rhine for the second time. Suomar, one of the most potent of the Alemanic princes, submitted at his approach. The territories of another named Hortorius, were wasted with fire and sword, and he was forced to sue for mercy. Both princes were obliged to restore all the captives in their hands, and to supply materials for the restoration of the towns which they had destroyed.

As the princes who dwelt beyond the territories of Suomar and Hortorius had likewise shared in the war, Julian prepared to cross the Rhine a third time in order to chastise them (359). As he was about to construct a bridge at Mentz the German princes marched with all their forces and occupied the further bank of the river. Their vigilance was such that there seemed but little prospect of the Romans being able to effect their design; but Julian caused three hundred men to drop down the stream one night in small boats, who very nearly succeeded in capturing the German princes as they were returning late from a banquet given by Hortorius, and their troops immediately dispersed to secure their families and property. The Romans then crossed the river unopposed, and wasted the lands in the usual manner; and the Alemanic kings, six in number, were glad to obtain peace on the conqueror's own terms. The number of Roman sub-

jects delivered from captivity by this and the preceding treaties was not less than twenty thousand.

Julian's civil administration rivaled his military exploits. The ruined cities were restored, and as the agriculture of Gaul had suffered severely from the events of late years, a fleet of six hundred large vessels was built for the regular importation of corn from the better cultivated isle of Britain, in order to supply the towns and fortresses along the Rhine, the free navigation of which stream to the sea Julian had forced the Franks to concede. Julian also attended strictly to the administration of justice; and he alleviated, as far as was in his power, the burden of excessive taxation under which the people groaned. The usual residence of the Cæsar during the winter was Lutetia or Paris (*Parisii*), a town built on an island in the Seine, and approached by two wooden bridges; while a suburb, in which stood the imperial palace, spread over the left bank of the river. For this city Julian had an extreme partiality; and we find him amid the luxury and profligacy of Antioch dwelling on its memory with tender affection*.

At the court of Constantius, Julian and his exploits were at first merely subjects of merriment to the eunuchs and the other favorites. His personal appearance and his manners were ridiculed in the presence of the emperor. He was called a she-goat, and no man (in allusion to the philosophic beard which he cherished), a chattering mole, an ape in purple, and so forth; nay, so far did courtly adulation and imperial folly proceed, that in the laureled letters sent to the provinces to announce the victory at Strasburg, Constantius was actually declared to have gained it in person! But the fame of Julian was not to be obscured by petty arts like these, and the plan was adopted of alarming the jealousy of the emperor by dwelling on the talents and virtues of the Cæsar, and hinting at the probability of his casting off his allegiance. As this was the subject on which Constantius was most susceptible of alarm, their stratagem easily succeeded; and a scheme for depriving him of the power to rebel was devised. In the spring of 360, a tribune and a notary arrived at Paris with orders for four entire divisions of the auxiliaries, and drafts of three hundred men each from

* Misopogon, p. 340.

the other corps to proceed without delay to join the imperial standard in the East. Julian represented in vain that the Germans had entered the Roman service on the express condition of not being sent beyond the Alps, and that a breach of faith like this might put a total end to further enlistments: he also urged the unprotected condition in which Gaul would be left by the withdrawal of so large a portion of the troops belonging to it; the imperial envoys would hear of nothing but obedience, and Julian was obliged to issue his orders for the march of the troops. His judicious advice that they should not pass through Paris was also despised, and ere long they approached that city. Julian went forth to meet them; he addressed them, extolling their former exploits, and urging them to yield a cheerful obedience to the imperial commands. He then invited the principal officers to an entertainment, from which they departed sad and dejected at the idea of quitting their lenient prince, and their natal soil. At the approach of night the discontent of the troops broke out into action; they seized their arms, and surrounding the palace with loud shouts proclaimed Julian Augustus. During the night the entrances of the palace were secured against them; but at dawn Julian was obliged to come forth. His resistance, his menaces, his entreaties, his arguments were of no avail; he was forced to yield to their violence, and accept the proffered dignity. They raised him triumphantly on a shield, they proclaimed him Augustus, and then desired him to produce a diadem. On his saying that he did not possess one, they called for his wife's collar or bracelet; but Julian deemed a female ornament inauspicious, and refused to use it; for a similar reason he rejected a horse-trapping. At length, a standard-bearer took a collar from his own neck, and placed it on the head of the Cæsar, who having promised a donative of five gold pieces and a pound of silver to each man, was at length permitted to retire into the palace.

In the manifesto which Julian some time after addressed to the Athenians, he declared in the most solemn manner that he was totally ignorant of the designs of the army; and he was a man of so much probity and had such a veneration for truth, that it is difficult to refuse him our belief. That judicious and honest historian Ammianus, who was a contemporary, hints not a suspicion on the subject; yet when we consider the ordinary conduct of men in such circumstances, and recollect that Julian must have been aware that the as-

sumption of empire was almost the only security against his sharing the fate of his brother, we find it impossible not to feel somewhat incredulous. The question is, therefore, one of the many which must remain for ever uncertain. That Julian was determined to retain the empire which he had accepted is beyond doubt; but he was most anxious to shun the guilt of the effusion of blood in civil war. On the day following that of his elevation, he assembled the troops, and addressing them with his usual eloquence, obtained from them an assurance, that if the emperor of the East would acknowledge him, they would remain quietly in Gaul: he at the same time pledged himself, that promotion, both civil and military, should henceforth go by merit and not by favour. Those officers who were known to be attached to Constantius were deposed and secured, but no blood was shed. Julian wrote to that emperor, excusing what had occurred, and requiring the confirmation of his dignity, but offering to acknowledge the supremacy of the elder emperor, and to supply him annually with Spanish horses and with barbarian recruits.

While Julian was waiting the return of his ambassadors from the East, he increased his army by proclaiming a general pardon to the bands of outlaws which had arisen in consequence of the persecution of the adherents of Magnentius, and they cheerfully accepted it, and crowded to his standard. He then crossed the Rhine for the fourth time to chastise the perfidy of the Attuarians, a Frankish tribe; and this object being effected, he marched southwards and took up his winter-quarters at Vienne. As this city was full of Christians, and a great part of his army followed the Christian creed, Julian, who, as we shall presently show, had long since adopted a different faith, condescended to play the hypocrite for probably the last time, and went publicly to the church on Christmas-day.

Early in the spring (361) Julian learned that Vadomar, an Alemanic prince, had committed ravages to the south of the Danube; and there appeared reason for believing that the German was acting in obedience to secret instructions from Constantius, who wished to find occupation for his rival in Gaul. Julian resolved to employ artifice; and he sent the notary Philagrius, furnished with secret instructions to entrap the German prince. When Philagrius came to the Rhine, Vadomar, thinking his proceedings unknown, passed over to

visit him, and readily accepted an invitation to a dinner. When he came, Philagrius retired to read his instructions, and in obedience to them he seized Vadomar and forwarded him to the camp of Julian, where being convicted by his own letter to Constantius, which had been intercepted, he was sent a prisoner into Spain. Julian then putting himself at the head of some light troops crossed the Rhine in the dead of the night, and so terrified the Germans, that they sought most humbly for pardon and peace.

The ambassadors of Julian had met with so many obstacles and delays, that they did not overtake Constantius till he had reached Cæsarea in Cappadocia on his way for the Persian war. The empress Eusebia and the princess Helena, whose influence might have prevented a rupture, were both dead; and Constantius, left to his own passions and the suggestions of his flatterers, returned a haughty answer, requiring Julian to renounce his usurped title and accept a pardon on certain conditions. Julian caused the letter to be read out in presence of the army, with whose consent he declared himself ready to resign his dignity; but the loud shouts of Julian Augustus, which rose on all sides, inspired him with resolution, and he dismissed the imperial envoy with a letter of defiance. These transactions, it may be observed, had taken place at Paris in the preceding year, just before Julian's expedition against the Attuarians.

Aware of the importance of bold and decisive measures in civil contests, and fearful of the arts of Constantius among the Germans, Julian resolved to advance at once into Illyricum. His soldiers readily agreed to follow him, and at Basil he divided his army into three divisions, of which one, under two officers named Jovius and Jovinus, was to go through the Alps and northern Italy; another under Nevitta, the commander of the cavalry, was to proceed through Noricum; while at the head of the third, Julian himself, entering the Black Forest, should make for the Danube, and go down that river in boats. This daring and judicious plan proved perfectly successful. Julian landed unexpectedly at Bononia, within nineteen miles of Sirmium, and seized Lucilian, the general of the cavalry, who was preparing to oppose him. At Sirmium he was joyfully received, and being immediately joined by his remaining divisions, he advanced and secured the pass of Succus in Mount Hæmus. When Constantius heard of the advance of Julian, he gave up all thoughts of the Persian war for the present,

and prepared to return and combat for his empire. But on his way he was attacked by a fever, caused, probably, by the agitation of his spirits, and he breathed his last at a little town near Tarsus named Mopsucrenæ, in the forty-fifth year of his age, naming, it is said, Julian for his successor.

CHAPTER IV.*

JULIAN. JOVIAN.

A.U. 1114-1117. A.D. 361-364.

Reformations of Julian.—His religion.—His tolerance.—Julian at Antioch.—Attempt to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem.—The Persian war.—Death of Julian.—Election of Jovian.—Surrender of territory to the Persians.—Retreat of the Roman army.—Death of Jovian.

Julian.

A.U. 1114-1116. A.D. 361-363.

JULIAN was at Naïssus when two officers of rank arrived, sent to inform him of the death of Constantius and of his nomination to the empire. He therefore passed Mount Hæmus without delay, marched by Philippopolis to Perinthus, and on the 11th of December he entered the capital amid the loud and joyful acclamations of the people.

The imperial palace, like the abode of an eastern monarch, swarmed with eunuchs and other ministers of luxury. The emoluments of these men were enormous, and their salaries and allowances formed an article of no trifling magnitude in the accounts of the treasury. We are told that one day when Julian called for a barber to trim his hair, he saw a man most splendidly dressed enter the apartment. The emperor in affected amazement exclaimed, "It was a barber, and not a receiver-general of the finances, that I sent for." He then inquired of him respecting his salary and perquisites, and found that, independently of a large salary and considerable perquisites, he had an allowance of twenty loaves a-day, and fodder for an equal number of horses. Julian, regardless of

* Authorities: Zosimus, Ammianus, Julian, Libanius, the Epitomators, and the Ecclesiastical Historians.

justice and of the claims of long, and in some cases faithful service, resolved on making a general clearance of the palace; and barbers, cooks, cup-bearers, and others, to the number of some thousands, got leave to go whither they would, many probably to starve. The emperor was also resolved that those who had been the instigators or instruments of the cruelties and oppressions exercised under the late reign should not escape with impunity. A commission composed of two civilians, Sallust the upright prefect of the East, and Mamertinus the consul-elect, and of four generals, Nevitta, Agilo, Jovinus, and Arbetio, was appointed to sit at Chalcedon to hear charges and pass sentences. As the number of the military men, some of whom were barbarians by birth, predominated in the tribunal, the decisions were as often the result of prejudice and faction as of justice. No one can condemn the execution of the chamberlain Eusebius, or of Apodemius, one of the chief agents in the destruction of Silvanus and Gallus, or of Paulus Catena, which last was burnt alive; but Justice herself seemed to Ammianus to have bewept the death of Ursulus the treasurer, and to have convicted the emperor of ingratitude; for when he was sent into Gaul, in want of almost everything, Ursulus had directed the treasurer there to supply him with all that he should require. Julian made a futile effort to get rid of the charge by averring that Ursulus was put to death without his knowledge. As little can the banishment of Taurus, the ex-prætorian prefect, be justified, whose only offence was loyalty to the prince whom he served. On the whole, however, the number of those who suffered death or banishment was not considerable, and most of them deserved their fate.

The love of justice and the correct sense of the duties of a ruler which Julian had displayed when a Cæsar in Gaul, did not desert him on the imperial throne in Constantinople; and had it not been for one fatal circumstance, he might have been the object of general applause and admiration. But Julian had renounced the religion of the empire and adopted that of ancient Greece, which he entertained the chimerical idea of restoring to its primitive importance; and in the pursuit of this object he did not attend sufficiently to the principles of justice and equity. From his change of faith he has been styled the Apostate, unjustly as appears to us, for of his sincerity there can be no doubt; and however we may lament for,

pity, or even despise those who change from conviction, we are not justified in condemning or reviling them.

Gallus and Julian after the massacre of their relatives had been committed to the charge of Eusebius, the bishop of Nicomedia. They were instructed in the articles of faith and practice then prevalent, with all of which they complied without any hesitation; and Julian it was remembered had publicly read the Holy Scriptures in the church of that city. But while the rude sullen Gallus became a steady and bigoted believer, the milder and more philosophic and studious Julian took a distaste to the religion in which he was instructed. He had been made familiar with the great writers of ancient Hellas by his tutor the eunuch Mardonius; and the admiration he felt for the works of Homer and other eminent poets, the veneration for antiquity, and the brilliant colours in which the ancient poetic Olympus stood invested, as contrasted with the groveling superstition with which he was surrounded; and the noble spirit and glorious deeds of the believers in the ancient creed, compared with the base arts and paltry actions of the men of his own time—all combined to operate on the mind of the young prince, and he became a believer in the theology of Homer and Hesiod. But it was not the charming poetic creed of the early and best days of Hellas that Julian adopted, it was the absurd contemptible mysticism of the New Platonists; and as in his Christianity he neglected the beautiful simplicity of the Gospel, confounding it with the intricate metaphysics and abject superstition which then prevailed in the Church; so in his paganism he lost the poetic creed of the old times in the tasteless unsubstantial vagaries and allegories of the school of Alexandria. In fact, he had not that original vigour of intellect which would have emancipated him from the spirit of the age. Superstition was the prevailing sentiment, and the philosophic emperor was in his way as deeply immersed in it as the most groveling ascetic.

According to the emperor's own account, he was a Christian till he reached his twentieth year. He then, after being instructed by various sophists, was by the archimage Maximus secretly initiated at Ephesus with all those ceremonies which imposture and superstition had imported from Asia and incorporated with the mythic faith of Hellas. During his short abode some years after at Athens, Julian was solemnly initiated in the mysteries of Eleusis. Still he was to outward ap-

pearance a Christian, and the empress Eusebia had not probably a shade of doubt respecting the faith of her distinguished *protégé*. In Gaul he appears to have still dissembled, and to have openly assisted at the Christian worship, while in his closet he offered his homage to the Sun and Hermes. When he assumed the imperial dignity he disdained all further concealment of his sentiments, and boldly proclaimed himself a votary of the ancient gods.

It may be, perhaps, laid down as an axiom in history, that when once a religious or political system has gone out of use among any people, its permanent restoration is an impossibility. The power of a monarch or of a political party may re-establish it for a time, but when the hand that sustained it is gone it sinks back into its previous state of neglect and impotence. The efforts of Julian to restore paganism must, therefore, even had his life been prolonged, have proved utterly abortive. The system had long been crumbling to pieces from internal feebleness and decay; the theism on which it was founded, and of whose various forms its beautiful mythes were merely the expositions*, had long been unknown; and the mystic views of the New Platonists which Julian had adopted were totally opposite to its spirit. To this should be added, that Christianity, corrupt as it then was, had by its noble spirit of benevolence and charity, by the sublimity of its original principles, and by the organisation of its hierarchy, a moral power such as the old religion had not possessed at any period of its prevalence. When we view the attempt of Julian in this light, we may feel disposed to pity, while we deride the folly of the imperial fanatic.

Julian was by nature just and humane; he was also a philosopher and statesman enough to know that persecution, if it does not go the full length of extermination, adds strength and numbers and energy to the persecuted and irritated party. He, therefore, instead of imitating Diocletian, proclaimed a general toleration. The pagans were directed to open their temples and offer victims as heretofore; the contending sects of Christians were commanded to abstain from harassing and tormenting each other. The catholic prelates and clergy, whom the Arian Constantius had banished, were accordingly restored to their sees and churches†. The real object of all this moderation, we are assured by Ammianus, was to increase

* See the author's Mythology of Ancient Greece and Italy.

† See below, Chapter VI.

the mutual animosity of the Christian sects by giving free course to their controversial spirit while depriving them of the power of exterminating each other, and thus to prevent their uniting in opposition to his ulterior projects.

We can hardly blame Julian for giving a preference to his fellow-believers in civil and military employments. This mild form of persecution is the fate of religious and political parties in all ages. But even his most partial admirers cannot (Ammianus does not) justify the edict which prohibited the Galileans, as he affected to style the Christians, from teaching the arts of grammar or rhetoric, *i. e.* from being schoolmasters. By means of this he expected that the Christian youth would either frequent the schools of the pagan teachers, and thus probably be converted; or they would abstain from them, and thus grow up in ignorance; and the church, losing the advantages of learning and cultivation, sink into contempt. A far more legitimate and laudable mode of warfare was his effort to reform paganism on the model of Christianity, by introducing into it those rules and practices to which the latter seemed to him indebted for its success. He thus desired that the priesthood in every city should be composed of persons, without distinction of birth or wealth, eminent for the love of gods and men; that the priest should be undefiled in mind and body, his reading be solely of a serious and instructive nature, and the theatre and the tavern be alike unvisited by him. He required that hospitals should be erected in each town; "for it is shameful to us," said he, "that no beggar should be found among the Jews, and that the impious Galileans should support not only their own poor but ours also, while these last appear destitute of all assistance from ourselves." These were his advice and exhortations to the sacerdotal bodies of the temples of Asia Minor, in which country alone such were to be found. It can be only these, we may observe, that are meant, when the hostility of the priests of the heathen to the Christian religion is noticed.

While Julian abode at Constantinople ambassadors arrived from distant countries, even from India, and the isle of Serendib or Ceylon, with which the subjects of the empire had now commercial relations. All was tranquil on the banks of the Rhine and the Danube, and the Persian monarch had made proposals of peace. It might therefore have been expected that a philosopher in principle and a devotee in religion, such as the emperor was, would have been satisfied to apply his

whole time and thoughts to the promotion of the welfare of his subjects and the extension of his religious creed. But Julian when in Gaul had been smitten with the passion for military glory; and the example of Alexander the Great, which had fascinated even Julius Cæsar, urged him to aspire to the conquest of the East. He therefore returned a haughty reply to the envoys of Sapor, and in the end of the spring (362) he passed over to Asia at the head of a formidable army. He made little delay on the road; his piety, however, induced him to turn aside and offer his devotions to the Mother of the Gods at Pessinus, the ancient seat of her worship. He arrived toward the end of the month of June at Antioch, where he resolved to remain till the following spring, when he should be prepared to open the campaign with vigour in Mesopotamia.

The people of Antioch received the emperor with loud demonstrations of joy. Julian now divided his thoughts between preparations for war, the administration of justice, and what he regarded as his religious duties. Each day numerous victims were sacrificed to the gods, for which purpose birds of white plumage were brought even from considerable distances; for in the creed of Julian, the gods derived pleasure, if not nourishment, from the holy steam which ascended from the altars on which the flesh of victims was consumed. He himself frequently slaughtered the sacred beasts with his own hands, and he sought in their reeking entrails to discover future events. Faithful in the discharge of all his religious duties, the pious emperor might be seen gravely moving along in religious procession amid a crowd of those persons of both sexes who led lives of infamy in the service of the licentious religions of the East.

The grove of Daphne, about five miles from Antioch, in which stood a stately temple of Apollo raised by the kings of Syria, had long been celebrated as the scene of acts of licentiousness most alien from the character of Phœbus Apollo, the purest object of Grecian worship, and *Daphnic manners* had long been proverbial. But since the triumph of Christianity the sanctity of the temple of Daphne had greatly declined; and on the day of the festival of the god, Julian, who seemed to estimate piety by the number of victims, was mortified to find that the only animal that bled on the altar of the lord of light was a solitary goose, provided at the cost of the sole remaining priest, whose means probably did not reach to the

purchase of a swan. The glory of Daphne had indeed departed; the emperor's own brother Gallus had caused the bones of the bishop Babylas, who had died in prison in the time of Decius, to be transported into the sacred precincts, and a stately church to be erected over them; and the grove of Daphne thus, in accordance with the superstition then prevalent, became a favourite burial place for the Christian inhabitants of Antioch. But Julian resolved to remove the profanation, and restore the temple to its pristine sanctity and magnificence. The church of St. Babylas was demolished, and the Christian bodies were removed. On this occasion the body of the saint was conveyed to Antioch in a lofty car, amid the loud singing of psalms by an immense multitude, and that very night the temple of Daphne was consumed by lightning sent from heaven at the prayer of the offended saint, according to the Christians of Antioch; by fire applied to it by themselves in the opinion of the emperor, who in return shut up their principal church and seized its wealth. Several of the Christians were tortured, and a presbyter named Theodoret was beheaded; but no persecution, properly speaking, took place. It was different, however, elsewhere; and in Gaza, Cæsarea, and other towns, the now triumphant Pagans exercised the most atrocious cruelties on the devoted Christians, and the emperor only gently condemned their excesses.

The great majority of the people of Antioch were Christians in rites and doctrines, but in practice they were very remote from the standard of gospel perfection; and Antioch had long been noted as the most luxurious and dissipated city of the East. The strict and austere morals of the emperor were therefore fully as distasteful to the Antiochians as his pagan superstition, and as they were a witty and ingenious people, they assailed him with the darts of ridicule. They mocked at his sacerdotal exercises; they derided his short stature and his efforts to make his shoulders appear broad, and his long strides in walking. But the grand butt of their shafts was his bushy *populous* beard, which in his character of philosopher he sedulously nourished. He took his revenge by writing a satire on the Antiochians, which he named *The Beardhater* (*Misopogon*); but he never forgave them, and he publicly declared his intention not to revisit their city.

At the same time, in order to win the favour of the common people, Julian adopted a very questionable policy. The harvest having been deficient, the natural consequences had fol-

lowed; corn was at a monopoly-price, and capitalists made it a matter of speculation. To remedy this evil, the emperor by an edict fixed a *maximum*, or highest price, at which corn might be sold; and he poured into the market 422,000 measures of corn drawn from the granaries of other towns, and even from Egypt. This corn, as might easily have been foreseen, was all bought up by the capitalists, the supply was kept back as before, and the small quantities that were brought into the market were sold underhand at a price beyond the *maximum*. Julian was perplexed; he would not or could not be made to see the policy of leaving trade to regulate itself; he was persuaded that the scarcity was entirely artificial, and produced by the conduct of the wealthy landowners; and on one occasion he arrested and sent to prison the whole senate of Antioch, consisting of two hundred members. They were, however, released in the evening, but cordiality was never restored between them and the emperor; and, as we have seen, they lampooned and ridiculed him, and he satirised them in return.

Julian, while at Antioch, as a means of mortifying the Christians, whom he hated, resolved on restoring the Jews to their country and rebuilding the temple of Jehovah, whom he regarded with respect as a national god. He committed the task to Alypius, an able and learned Antiochian, who had been governor of Britain; and this officer, being seconded by the governor of the province, set at once about clearing away the ruins on Mount Moriah; but a tempest and earthquake, and flames which burst from the ground and scorched and burned the workmen, prevented the progress of the work, and the death of the emperor put an end to all thoughts of resuming it.

The Christians of the time viewed in this event the direct interference of Heaven, and many modern, even protestant, writers take the same view. By so doing, no concession certainly is made to the false miracles of the church of Rome, and we are very far from holding, that Providence might not see fit to interpose in a case of extraordinary importance. But we deny such to have been the case in the present instance; the futility of Julian's efforts against Christianity, and the fate which so soon awaited him, could not be unknown to Omniscience, and a miracle seems therefore to have been superfluous. The present one is, moreover, explicable perhaps by natural causes. We know how prone the ecclesiastical writers

were to convert, partly from ignorance, partly from design, natural events into miracles, and also how a tale gains in its progress. Rejecting therefore the storm and earthquake*, and confining ourselves to the fiery explosions to which we have the testimony of Ammianus, it has been supposed that the phænomenon may come under the head of fire-damp, with the cause and effects of which we are now so familiar, and that the workmen may have been injured by the air, which had now been confined for three centuries in the vaults and cavities beneath the site of the temple. Still this explanation is not without its difficulties†; and though we ourselves cannot regard the event as supernatural, we leave the reader to form his own judgement, and return to the plain path of history.

In the spring of the year 363, Julian departed from Antioch, and proceeded to Bercea (*Aleppo*), and thence marched to Hierapolis, not far from the banks of the Euphrates, at which town the troops had been ordered to rendezvous. The river was passed without delay, and as it seems to have been the emperor's design to enter the enemy's country by Nisibis and Armenia, the army advanced to Carrhæ. But circumstances having caused him to alter his views, he detached his relative Procopius with Sebastian, ex-duke of Egypt, and thirty thousand select troops, directing them to join Arsaces, king of Armenia, and having ravaged the adjacent parts of Media, to be prepared to co-operate with him on the Tigris when he should have reached that river. He himself, having directed his march, as it were, for that river, suddenly turned to the right, and reached Callinicum on the Euphrates, along which he proceeded till he came to Circesium the southern limit of the Roman dominion beyond the river, built at the confluence of the Aboras and the Euphrates.

The imperial army, the largest ever led by a Roman emperor against Persia, counted sixty-five thousand men. It was composed of the veteran troops of the East and the West, of Scythian (*i. e.* Sarmatian) auxiliaries, and of bodies of the Saracens or Bedoween light horse, who had joined the emperor, since his passage of the Euphrates. Parallel to the march of the army a fleet moved along the river composed of fifty war-galleys, an equal number adapted for the formation

* Yet, according to Ammianus (xxiii. l.), a shock of an earthquake was felt at Constantinople at this very time.

† The fire-damp we believe only occurs in coal-mines, and the choke-damp or carbonic acid gas which is generated in vaults, etc. is not inflammable.

of bridges, and one thousand vessels of various kinds, carrying provisions, arms, and warlike machines. On leaving Circesium, the army entered the hostile territory, and moved southwards along the Euphrates. It marched in three parallel columns: the infantry, which formed the strength of the army, led by the emperor in person, occupied the centre; Nevitta at the head of some legions moved along the bank of the river on the right; while the cavalry, under an officer of high rank in the East named Arinthæus, and the Persian prince Hormisdas (*Hoormuz**), was placed on the left, where the assaults of the enemy were most to be apprehended; and the charge of the rear-guard was committed to Dagalaiphus, Victor, and Secundinus, duke of Osrhoene. The whole line of march extended nearly ten miles in breadth. The country over which the army passed was a level sandy plain, in which were only to be seen the wild ass and antelope, the ostrich and the bustard. It was destitute of trees, and its only plants were wormwood and aromatic reeds and shrubs. On the evening of the sixth day the army reached Anatha (*Annah*), a town situated on an island of the Euphrates, the people of which at first prepared to resist; but they yielded to the instances of prince Hormisdas, and opened their gates. The next town to which the army came stood also in an island: it was named Thilutha, and was so strong, that the emperor judged it prudent to be content with the promise of the inhabitants to surrender when he should have conquered the interior country. The people of the next town made a similar promise; the remaining towns on the route were found deserted, and were pillaged and burnt; and at length the army, in about fifteen days after its departure from Circesium, arrived at Macepracta, the frontier-town of the ancient Assyria. During the latter days of the march, the Persian Surena†, and Rhodosaces, the emir of the tribe of Gassan (*Assaniteum*), had been hovering about the army with their light cavalry, and on one occasion Hormisdas narrowly escaped becoming their captive.

The army now entered Assyria, and having surmounted the impediments caused by the numerous canals with which that province was intersected, arrived at a strong city named

* Hormisdas was a member of the royal family of Persia, who made his escape from prison in the troubles which occurred during the minority of Sapor. He sought refuge at the court of Constantius, and rose to high rank in the Roman army. He was a Christian.

† For the meaning of this term, see History of Rome, p. 411 note.

Perisabor (*Anbar*), situated close to the Euphrates. The garrison having despised the summons to surrender, the town was invested. A breach was soon effected in a tower at one of the angles of the wall, and the garrison abandoning the town, retired into the citadel which overhung the river. The Romans entered and burned the town, and then erected their machines against the citadel. The garrison made a gallant defence till they saw a *Helepolis*, or moving tower, advancing against the walls. They then demanded a conference with Hormisdas, and the governor being let down from the walls for the purpose, the terms of surrender were arranged. The inhabitants, two thousand five hundred in number, (for the greater part had made their escape over the river) were allowed to retire, and the fort was then reduced to ashes.

Quitting the banks of the Euphrates, the emperor now directed his course toward those of the Tigris. When the army had marched about fourteen miles, they found the land covered with water, the natives having opened the sluices by which they were used to turn the waters over their fields. The canals were also full, and it was found necessary to halt a day in order to construct bridges of skin-bags, and leathern boats, and of the palm-trees which grew so abundantly in that region. The difficulties of the route being thus surmounted, the army reached a large town named Maogamalca, distant only eleven miles from the suburbs of Ctesiphon. As this strong fortress could not be safely left in their rear, an immediate siege was resolved on. The emperor himself advanced on foot with a few of his guards to reconnoitre the site of the town, when suddenly they were fallen on by ten Persians, who had stolen out by a postern gate, and had crept round through the adjacent hillocks. Two of them singled out the emperor and attacked him sword in hand, but he received their strokes on his shield and ran one of them through, and the other was slain by the guards who came to his relief. The next day the canal which lay between the army and the town was passed by means of bridges, and a camp was formed, secured by a double rampart, against the attacks of the Surena, and his numerous cavalry. At the same time the Roman horse, under the command of Victor, was directed to scour the country as far as the suburbs of Ctesiphon. The siege was then commenced in form. The garrison defended themselves gallantly, but they were not aware of their walls, while openly assailed by rams and other engines, being secretly undermined ;

and while they were exerting all their power against the enemy, whom they saw, fifteen hundred Roman soldiers emerged from the floor of one of the temples, and slaughtering all whom they met, opened the gates to their companions. A general massacre ensued; rage and lust burst all restraints; neither age nor sex was spared, and the governor* and eighty of his guards, and some of the women, seem alone to have survived the carnage. The town was razed, and it being ascertained that a party of the enemy had concealed themselves in the artificial caverns, which were numerous in those parts, with the intention of falling on the rear of the army as it was departing, fires of straw and wood were made at the mouths of the caverns, and they were thus either smothered, or forced to come out and be slain.

The march being resumed, the army came to a *paradise* or royal park walled in, and abundantly stocked with lions, bears, and other kinds of oriental game. The walls were instantly broken down, and the soldiers amused themselves with slaughtering the savage denizens.

At length the Roman army beheld the walls and towers of Ctesiphon crowning the opposite bank of the Tigris, while its suburb of Coche† lay not far from their camp. To form the siege of the latter while it could be so easily succoured from the city on the opposite side of the river, seemed a needless and a tedious task; and to pass the army over for the attack on the capital, the fleet from the Euphrates would be requisite. The Nahar-malca or royal canal, which poured the waters of that river into the Tigris, was at hand, but it discharged itself below Coche, while the army was encamped above that city. Julian, however, was aware that Trajan and Severus had opened a new course for that canal, which had been afterwards dammed up, and effaced by the Persians, and among the prisoners there chanced to be an old man who recollected and pointed out its situation. The army was immediately set to work, and the Roman fleet speedily rode on the Tigris. The broad Nahar-malca was passed by a bridge of boats, and the army approaching Coche, encamped at a stately palace adorned with paintings of the royal hunts, and surrounded with rich and well-planted fields.

It was at this spot that Julian resolved to attempt the pas-

* His name was Nabdates; he was burnt alive a few days after for having used insulting language to prince Hormisdas.

† Formerly called Seleucia.

sage of the Tigris. The difficulties he knew to be great; the stream is rapid, the banks are high; they were occupied by a strong force of cavalry, infantry and elephants, and the city of Ctesiphon, with its numerous population and garrison, was at hand. But Julian relied on fortune, who so long had stood his friend; and having previously caused some of the strongest of the vessels that carried the provisions and machines to be unladen, and eighty soldiers to embark in each of them, he summoned his generals to council, and informed them of his intention of attempting the passage that very night. They all remonstrated against it, but in vain, and Victor, to whom the task was committed, prepared to obey. As soon as the word was given, five of the vessels started, and running down with the current made for the opposite shore. When they reached it the enemy attacked them, and set them on fire. Julian, on beholding the flame, though aware of the truth, cried out that it was the appointed signal, and that the landing had been effected. Instantly every vessel pushed off and swept down the stream with such speed, that they arrived in time to save both the men and the vessels. Many soldiers in their ardour trusted themselves on their broad shield to the current; the banks were speedily won and the troops formed. They were joined by the emperor, and after a contest of about twelve hours' duration, the Persians fled to Ctesiphon, which the Romans might have entered pell-mell with them but for the caution of Victor, who feared that they might be overwhelmed by the multitude of the people. The loss of the Persians was said to be two thousand five hundred, that of the Romans only seventy men. The emperor distributed civic, naval, and castrensic crowns to those who had most distinguished themselves, and he prepared to offer numerous victims to Mars the Avenger*. But of ten oxen of eminent beauty selected for this purpose, nine fell to the ground in melancholy mood before they approached the altars, and the tenth burst his bonds and escaped; and when he was caught and slain, the signs in his entrails were of ill omen. At the sight, Julian in indignation took Jove to witness that he would never again sacrifice to Mars†.

It might have been expected that the siege of Ctesiphon,

* Perhaps because Augustus had built a temple to his god after the recovery of the standards from the Parthians. See above, p. 9.

† Probably in imitation of Augustus. See History of Rome, page 478.

a city which had thrice surrendered to the Roman arms, would now be commenced without delay. But in the council which was held in the presence of the emperor, to deliberate on the question, it was unanimously agreed that it would be highly imprudent to undertake it, and Julian himself fully concurred in the opinion of the council. Intelligence also arrived, that on account of the treacherous conduct of the king of Armenia and the dissension of the Roman generals, there was now no chance of his being joined by the troops sent from Carrhæ. To retreat might be disgraceful, but prudence counseled that a minister, whom Sapor had secretly sent to prince Hormisdas, to propose terms of peace, should be admitted to an audience. Unhappily Julian recollected that his Macedonian prototype had always rejected the propositions of Darius, and Hormisdas was ordered to dismiss the envoy before the soldiers should know of his arrival. Julian also resolved, like Alexander, to advance and pursue his rival; and he was encouraged in this design by the arrival of a Persian nobleman, who with a train of his followers came, pretending to seek refuge and protection from the cruelty of Sapor; and describing the discontent of the people, and the weakness of the government, offered to be the guide of the Romans. As it would be necessary to quit the banks of the Tigris, and the shipping and stores, if left behind, must inevitably fall into the hands of the enemy, Julian issued orders for the whole to be burnt, except twelve of the smaller vessels, which should be conveyed with the army, for the construction of bridges. The discontent and fears of the troops, however, caused an attempt to be made, when too late, to extinguish the flames; and men, judging by the event, have condemned the conduct of the emperor, whose real error was of a very different kind.

Quitting therefore the banks of the Tigris, the Roman army entered on the fertile country to the east of that river. At first supplies were had in plenty, but as they advanced they found the villages deserted, and the grass and standing corn in flames. They were frequently obliged to encamp till the flames had subsided on the ground over which they were to march: the Persian cavalry now began to show itself more boldly, and the treacherous guide, having obtained his object, disappeared. Any further advance was now hopeless; the only question was, what line of retreat should be adopted. The soldiers were clamorous for returning by the route by which they had come, but the emperor and their officers

proved to them that the wasted state of the country, the inundation of the river (now swollen by the melting of the snows in the mountains), and the quantity of mosquitoes and other insects, from which they had already suffered most severely, would render a retreat by that route nearly impracticable. It was therefore resolved to turn northwards, and endeavour to gain the trans-Tigrian Roman province of Corduene. As soon as the retreat commenced, the Persians, who had hitherto only shown themselves in small parties, appeared in greater force, and the Romans had to win their way by strength of hand. The country still was burnt, and the towns were everywhere deserted. In the district named Maranga a general attack was made by the Persian army, but they were finally repelled with loss, after the action had lasted from daybreak to sunset. A truce was then made for three days, in order that the wounded on both sides might be tended; but on the part of the Romans there was hardly any food for man or beast, and the superior officers had to share their own private stores with the common men. On this, as on all occasions, the emperor set a noble example. He used only such food as a common soldier would have actually disdained, and he directed the provisions of his household to be distributed among the troops. The uneasiness of his mind causing his sleep to be broken, he used to read and write in his tent when thus kept awake. As he was engaged in this way one night, he beheld the Genius of the State, who had already appeared to him in Gaul, the night before he was declared emperor, retreating from the tent with a dejected air, his head and cornucopiæ shrouded in a veil. He rose from his humble couch and made deprecatory offerings to the gods, committing all to their will: as he looked out, he beheld a meteor flaming across the sky, and he shuddered when he thought that it might be the menacing star of Mars. Before daylight he summoned the Tuscan haruspices to his tent, to explain the meaning of the sign. They counseled him not to give battle that day, or at all events not to move from where he was for at least some hours; but he took no heed of their warnings, and at daybreak (June 26) the army set forward.

The Persians hovered around as usual. Julian was riding unarmed out before his troops to reconnoitre, when he heard that the rear was attacked. Snatching up a shield he was hastening to its support, but he was recalled by intelligence that the troops in advance, whom he had just quitted, were

also attacked : he was riding back, when a furious charge was made by the Persians on the centre of the left, which was yielding to the pressure of their heavy-armed cavalry and elephants. He flew to their aid ; at that very moment the Roman light troops drove off the enemy ; and stretching out his hands, he was urging on his men to follow up their success, and was giving them an example himself, when a spear grazed his arm, and entering his side pierced the lower part of his liver. He attempted to pull it out, but the sharp steel cut his fingers deeply, and he fell from his horse. He was taken up by those about him, and conveyed away, and committed to the care of the surgeons. When the pain was a little assuaged, he called for his horse and arms, that he might return to the aid of his troops ; but he soon perceived that his strength did not correspond with his will. Meantime the action was maintained vigorously on both sides, and the Persians were finally repulsed, with a loss of fifty men of rank, and a great number of the common soldiers. The Romans had to lament the death of Anatolius, the master of the offices, and the aged prefect Sallust narrowly escaped the same fate.

Julian, aware that he was dying, addressed those who were mourning around him. He expressed his satisfaction, that it had pleased the gods, who had often given an early death as their best boon, to withdraw him from the danger of corruption ; he reflected with pleasure on the innocence of his past life, and declared that he had always endeavoured to promote the welfare of the people, which he regarded as the true end of government. He had therefore sought to maintain peace, and repress license, and though it was foretold to him that he would perish by steel, he did not shrink from exposing himself to danger. He was grateful, he said, to the Supreme Being that he had not fallen by a conspiracy, or been taken off by a lingering disease, but was thus removed in the midst of his glorious career. He would say nothing on the choice of his successor, lest he might chance to pass over a worthy person, or by naming some one of whom the army might not approve, expose him to danger. When he had concluded he distributed his private property among his friends. He rebuked those present for their tears, saying it was a mean thing to mourn for a prince who was about to be united to the stars. When they had ceased, he conversed with the philosophers, Maximus and Priscus, on the nature of the soul, till his wound beginning to bleed afresh, he called for a

draught of cold water, and when he had drunk it he breathed his last, about midnight, in the thirty-second year of his age.

We have devoted so much space to the actions of this emperor, that any remarks on his character may appear superfluous. Yet there is in it so much to interest, that we cannot refrain from keeping it in view a little longer, and pointing out his virtues as well as his faults—vices he had none—more especially as he has been so hardly treated by those injudicious writers, who think themselves bound to portray the enemy of their faith as a perfect monster. The time, however, is arrived in which a better knowledge of the Gospel has removed such narrow prejudice, and the virtues of Julian and the crimes of Constantine may be recognised without Christianity being supposed to sustain an injury.

In person Julian was of middle height, broad-shouldered, and well-built. His nose was straight, his eyes bright; his shaggy beard was peaked, his hair was soft and fine. He was able to endure great bodily fatigue, and he never shrank from toil or danger. He practised without effort the four cardinal virtues, and their attendant moral qualities. His chastity was conspicuous; he had never known a woman when he married, and after the death of his wife he thought no more of the sex. In his German and his Persian wars he displayed the talents of an able general, and he was both loved and feared by his soldiers. Julian was learned, and at the same time himself an elegant writer. His principal faults were vanity and superstition. He was too fond of talking, and took too much pleasure in light conversation and buffoonery; he was negligent of his person and dress to a degree that indicated an originally feeble mind. It is melancholy to read of his superstitious regard to portents; his fancied intercourse with the fabled gods of Greece, and his extreme love for pouring forth the blood of victims in their honour*. His enmity to the Christians was unjust and little-minded, but their revenge has been ample. Julian was not a great man, but he was better qualified to rule than most princes; and though we may not admire, we must esteem his character.

* "Superstitiosus magis quam sacrorum legitimus observator, innumeras sine parsimonia pecudes mactans, ut æstimaretur si revertisset de Parthis boves jam defuturos: Marci illius similis Cæsaris in quem id accepimus dictum:—Οἱ λευκοὶ βόες Μάρκῳ τῷ Καίσαρι. Ἄν σὸ νικῆσης, ἡμεῖς ἀπολώμεθα." Ammianus, xxv. 4.

Jovian.

A.U. 1116-1117. A.D. 363-364.

The morning after the death of Julian a general assembly of the officers of the army was held for the purpose of choosing an emperor; for as the house of Constantine was now extinct, no one could justly put forth any other claim than that of merit. They were split into two parties; Arinthæus, Victor, and the remaining courtiers of Constantius looked out for one of their own party whom they might propose; while Nevitta, Dagalaiphus, and the Gallic officers sought a candidate of their own side. Both, however, agreed in the person of the prefect Sallust, but he declined the honour, pleading his age and his infirmities. An officer of rank then proposed that they should for the present only think of extricating the army from the instant perils, and that when they reached Mesopotamia they might choose an emperor at their leisure. But while they were deliberating some persons saluted as emperor Jovianus, the commander of the Domestics, or body-guard. He was immediately invested with the royal robes, and he rode through the troops, who readily acknowledged his authority.

Jovianus, whom the caprice of fortune thus elevated to the purple, was distinguished more by his father's merit than his own. He was the son of count Varronianus, who after having long served with reputation was now living in dignified retirement. Jovian was tall and comely in person, of a gay and cheerful temper, a lover of wine and women, fond of literature, at the same time a good soldier, and even a zealous Christian.

As soon as Jovian was proclaimed, victims were slain, and their entrails inspected. The augurs having pronounced that it would be the utter ruin of the army to remain where it was, the march was instantly resumed. The Persians, emboldened by the intelligence of the death of Julian, conveyed to them by deserters, pressed on with redoubled vigour; but in spite of their incessant attacks, the Romans succeeded in reaching Sumere (*Samara*) on the Tigris, about one hundred miles above Ctesiphon. Marching up the stream they encamped next night in a valley, at a place named Carche, and on the first of July they arrived at the town of Dura, where they were detained for four days by the persevering energy of the enemy.

The impatient soldiers insisted on passing the river at that place, and Jovian and his officers having remonstrated with them to no purpose, a body of five hundred Gauls and Sarmatians were directed to try if they could swim across the stream. They made the attempt at night and easily succeeded, and the impatience of the soldiers could only be restrained by the promise of the engineers that they would construct bridges of inflated skins.

Should the Romans succeed in passing the river or in reaching the frontiers of Corduene, which were only a hundred miles distant, they would be out of danger, and might continue the war with advantage. Sapor, therefore, resolved not to let slip the occasion of concluding a treaty, while they were in his power. He accordingly despatched the Surena and another nobleman to the Roman camp, to signify that on certain conditions their sovereign, out of his clemency, would permit the emperor and the remnant of his army to depart in safety. Sallust and Arinthæus were sent to the Persian monarch, by whom they were artfully detained for four entire days, during which the army suffered severely from the want of food. The terms which Sapor insisted on were the absolute cession of the five provinces beyond the Tigris, and the surrender of the cities of Nisibis, Singara, and the Moors' camp (*Castra Maurorum*). He also required that no aid should at any future time be given to the king of Armenia against the Persians. To these severe and humiliating conditions Jovian acceded, only stipulating that the inhabitants of Nisibis and Singara should be permitted to depart with their moveable property. A peace was then concluded for thirty years, and hostages of rank were exchanged on both sides.

This was the most inglorious treaty ever concluded by Rome, for it was the first by which she had parted with territory. The conquests of Trajan had, it is true, been abandoned by Hadrian and Aurelian, but these were voluntary cessions, dictated by political wisdom; the treaty of Dura was a plain confession of inferiority, a barter of territory for life and liberty. Ammianus, who was present, speaks of it with the grief and indignation of a gallant soldier, and he maintains that in the four days that were spent in negotiation the army might have reached Corduene, though it was a hundred miles distant. But he seems to have forgotten that the incessant attacks of the Persians had already forced the army to halt at Dura, and he does not explain how an army of 60,000

men could have marched one hundred miles in four days without provisions, and continually assailed by an active and persevering foe. Eutropius, who was also present, is perhaps more correct in saying that the peace though inglorious was necessary. But the original error may be charged on Julian, who should have repassed the Tigris when he found himself unable to undertake the siege of Ctesiphon, and perhaps it was death alone that saved him from the disgrace of concluding the treaty of Dura.

The Roman soldiers hastened to pass to the further bank of the river. Some crossed on inflated skins, leading their horses by the bridle: others got over in the boats which had been brought with the army. Some of the more impatient, who had not waited for the signal for the passage, were drowned in their attempts to swim across; or if they reached the other side, were slain or carried away for slaves by the Saracens. When the whole army had effected its passage the march was directed for the Roman territory. The ruins of the once impregnable Atra were passed, and after a march of seventy miles, which occupied six days, over an arid plain, which only produced bitter plants and brackish water, the army reached the castle of Ur, where it was met by a small convoy of provisions, sent from the army of Procopius and Sebastian. The troops made a halt there for a few days, of which the emperor took the advantage for sending appointments to offices of trust and importance to those whom he thought best calculated to support his interests in the West. When the supply of provisions was exhausted, the army renewed its march, and the famine which it experienced was so great, that a *modius* (20lbs.) of meal, whenever it chanced to be found, was sold for ten pieces of gold. At the town of Thilsaphata the emperor was met by Sebastian and Procopius, and their principal officers; and the army finally encamped under the walls of Nisibis, which city shame prevented Jovian from entering, though earnestly entreated by the people.

The following day, Bineses, a Persian nobleman, who was one of the hostages sent with the army, called on the emperor to fulfil his promise and surrender the town. Jovian, having acceded to his demand, he entered and displayed the banner of Persia from the citadel. Nothing could exceed the grief and indignation of the Nisibenes. They implored the emperor not to force them to migrate, affirming that even unaided

they were able to maintain their town against all the power of Persia. But Jovian, alleging a regard for his oath, was deaf to their entreaties; and at length, exasperated at an advocate named Silvanus, who cried out, when he saw a crown presented to him by the citizens, "May you be thus crowned, O emperor, by the remaining cities!" he issued orders for those to depart within three days who were not willing to be subjects of the king of Persia. The grief and lamentation were naturally great, and the loss of property was considerable, owing to the want of beasts of burden to convey it away. A new quarter was built at Amida for the reception of the exiles, which city, in consequence, resumed its former importance. Singara and the Moors'-camp were surrendered in like manner, and Jovian then led his troops to Antioch. The remains of the late emperor were committed to the charge of Procopius, to be conveyed to Tarsus.

The attachment of Jovian to the Christian faith was well known. On the march to Antioch the Labarum was again displayed. By a circular epistle, addressed to the governors of the provinces, he declared the Christian faith to be the religion of the empire; all the edicts of Julian against it were abolished, and the church was restored to its possessions and immunities. The prelates thronged to the court of the Christian emperor; and the venerable Athanasius, although seventy years of age, undertook, at that advanced season of the year, a journey from Alexandria to Antioch, in order to confirm him in the path of orthodoxy. By a wise and humane edict Jovian calmed the fears of his pagan subjects, proclaiming universal toleration, except for the practisers of magic arts.

Impatient to reach the capital, Jovian remained only six weeks at Antioch. He first marched to Tarsus, where he made a brief halt, and gave directions relating to the tomb of Julian. At Tyana, in Cappadocia, he was met by deputies, sent to assure him of the obedience of the armies and people of the West. On the 1st of January, 364, he assumed the consulate at Ancyra, with his infant son for his colleague; whose crying and reluctance to be carried in the curule chair were regarded as ominous. He thence proceeded toward the capital; but having supped heartily one night (Feb. 17) when he halted at Dastana, a little town on the frontiers of Bithynia, he was found dead in his bed the following morning. Various causes were assigned for his death, but the most probable one was his having

lain in a recently plastered room, in which there was a large fire of charcoal. He was in the thirty-third year of his age, and he had not reigned quite eight months.

CHAPTER V.*

VALENTINIAN. VALENS. GRATIAN. VALENTINIAN II. AND THEODOSIUS.

A.U. 1117-1148. A.D. 364-395.

Elevation of Valentinian and of Valens.—Procopius.—German wars.—Recovery of Britain.—Rebellion in Africa.—Quadan war.—Death of Valentinian.—His Character.—Gratian.—The Goths.—The Huns.—The Gothic war.—Battle of Hadrianople and Death of Valens.—Ravages of the Goths.—Theodosius.—Settlements of the Goths.—Maximus.—Death of Gratian.—Defeat of Maximus.—Massacre at Thessalonica.—Clemency of Theodosius.—Death of Valentinian II.—Defeat and death of Eugenius.—Death and Character of Theodosius.—State of the Empire.

Valentinian and Valens.

A.U. 1117-1128. A.D. 364-375.

THE death of the emperor Jovian did not prevent the advance of the army, and while it was on its march for Nicæa, the generals and civil officers met in frequent deliberation on the choice of an emperor. All the suffrages were united in favour of the prefect Sallust, but he again refused the imperial dignity, either for himself or for his son, alleging the age of the one and the inexperience of the other. Various persons were named and rejected: at length all united in approbation of Valentinian, who was then at Ancyra, in command of the second school of the Scutarians, and an invitation was sent to him to repair to Nicæa, where the solemn election was to be held.

Valentinian was a Pannonian by birth, son of count Gratian, a distinguished officer. He had himself served with great credit, and was now in the forty-third year of his age. In person he was tall and handsome. He was chaste and temperate in his habits; but his mind had been little cultivated, and he was unacquainted with the Greek language, and with literature in general. He was a Christian in religion, and he had offended the emperor Julian by the public expression of his contempt for the rites of paganism.

* Authorities: Ammianus, Zosimus, the Epitomators, and Ecclesiastical Historians.

Every prudent measure was adopted by the friends of Valentinian to prevent the appearance of a competitor for the empire. No time it might therefore be supposed would have been lost in causing him to be acknowledged; yet it was not till the second day after his arrival at Nicæa that he let himself be seen; the first happening to be the Bissextile, a day noted as unlucky in the annals of Rome. On the evening of that day, at the suggestion of Sallust, it was forbidden on pain of death for any man of high rank to appear the next morning in public. At daybreak the impatient troops all assembled without the city; Valentinian advanced, and having ascended a lofty tribunal, was unanimously saluted emperor. He was then arrayed in the imperial habit, and was proceeding to address the assembled troops, when a general cry arose for him to name a colleague; for late events had made even the meanest perceive the danger of an unsettled succession. The tumult increased and menaced to become serious, when the emperor by his authority stilled the clamour, and addressing them declared that he felt as well as they the necessity of an associate in the toils of government, but that the choice required time and deliberation. He assured them that he would make the choice with all convenient speed, and in conclusion promised them the usual donative. Their clamours were converted into acclamations, and the emperor was conducted to the palace surrounded by eagles and banners, and guarded by all the troops.

The word was given to march for Nicomedia. Meantime Valentinian called a council of his principal officers to deliberate on the choice of a colleague, though he had probably already in his own mind fixed on the person. All were silent but the free-spoken Dagalaiphus, who said, "If you love your own family, most excellent emperor, you have a brother; if the state, seek whom you may invest with the purple." Valentinian was offended, but he concealed his feelings. The army marched for the Bosphorus, and soon after their arrival at Constantinople (Mar. 28), the emperor assembled them in a plain near the city, and presented to them his brother Valens, as his colleague in the empire. In this choice he proved that natural affection was stronger in his breast than regard for the public happiness; for Valens, though in his thirty-sixth year, had never borne any employment or showed any distinguished talent. As none, however, ventured to dissent, the choice seemed to be made with the general approbation.

A general reformation of the administration of the empire was effected in the course of the year. Most of the officers of the palace and governors of provinces appointed by Julian were dismissed; but the whole proceeding was regulated by equity. In the spring of the following year (365) the two emperors quitted the capital of the East, and at the palace of Mediana, three miles from Naissus, they made a formal division of the empire, and parted—never again to meet. Valentinian, reserving to himself the West, committed the East, including Greece and the country south of the Lower Danube, to the rule of his brother. The able generals and great officers were also divided between them: to the inexperienced Valens were assigned the services of Sallust, Victor, Arinthæus, and Lupicinus; among those whom Valentinian retained for himself was the intrepid Dagalaiphus.

Valens had soon to contend for his empire. Procopius, after the funeral of the emperor Julian, had retired to his estates in Cappadocia, where he lived in peace, till an officer and soldiers appeared, sent by the new emperors to arrest him. He made his escape to the sea-coast, and sought refuge among the barbarians of the country of Bosphorus; but after some time, weary of the hardships and privations he endured, he came secretly to Bithynia, and sheltered himself there in various retreats. He at length ventured into the capital, where two of his friends, a senator and a eunuch, afforded him concealment. He there observed the discontent of the people, who despised Valens, and detested his father-in-law Petronius, a cruel hard-hearted man, who seemed to have no other desire than that of stripping every man of his property, claiming with this view the payment of debts due to the state, even so far back as the reign of Aurelian. Emboldened by this aspect of affairs, Procopius resolved to acquire the empire or perish in the attempt. The conjuncture was favourable, for Sapor having resumed hostilities, Valens had passed over to Asia to take the field against him. While he was in Bithynia he learned that the Goths were preparing to invade Thrace, which was now unguarded. He therefore sent back some of his troops, and as they had to pass through Constantinople, Procopius seized the occasion of attempting to gain over two Gallic cohorts, which had halted in that city. His promises and the memory of Julian prevailed with them. At the dawn of day Procopius appeared in their quarters like one risen from the dead, and having renewed his promises was

saluted emperor. They escorted him thence to the tribunal. The people at first were silent and indifferent, but a few hired voices having set the example, they joined in the acclamation of emperor. Procopius then took possession of the palace; he displaced the officers of Valens, and secured the gates of the city and the entrance of the port. Numbers flocked to his standard, the troops as they arrived from Asia were seduced, those on the northern frontier were induced to declare for him, and the Gothic princes to promise a large body of auxiliaries. Faustina, the widow of Constantius, joined his party, and he carried about with him her daughter Constantia, a child only five years old. He thus endeavoured to make his cause appear to be that of the house of Constantine against the upstart Pannonians.

When Valens heard of the events at Constantinople, he gave way to the most abject despair, and even meditated resigning the purple, till he was brought back to nobler thoughts by the remonstrances of his officers. He then sent the Jovian and Herculan legions against the usurper, who was now at Nicæa. Procopius met them on the banks of the Sangarius, and when the troops were on the point of engaging he advanced alone into the midst, and addressing the opposite legions, induced them to declare for him. Valens, nevertheless, advanced to Nicomedia, having sent one of his generals to invest Nicæa, and he himself soon after laid siege to Chalcedon. But the besiegers were beaten off at Nicæa, and Valens, whose army was in want of provisions, and who feared to be attacked in the rear by the garrison of Nicæa, retired with all speed to Ancyra, leaving Procopius master of Bithynia. At Ancyra he was joined by Lupicinus with a strong body of troops from Syria. He then gave the command to Arinthæus, who advanced against the rebels that were at Dadastana, under the command of one Hyperectrises, a man of low rank, whom Procopius had raised out of friendship. Arinthæus, when he beheld him, called out to the soldiers to bind their commander and deliver him up, and such was his ascendancy over their minds that they obeyed his mandate. Procopius, however, made himself master of Cyzicus on the Hellespont. He then unwisely suffered his soldiers to plunder the house of Arbetio*, who was living in retirement; and instead of advancing at once into Asia, where

* See above, p. 325.

the people would probably have declared for him, he thought only of collecting money for carrying on the war.

In the spring (366) Valens advanced into Galatia, and as Procopius carried the infant daughter of Constantius with him to the field, he invited the offended Arbeto to repair to his camp; and this aged general of Constantine's, taking off his helmet, and displaying his hoary locks, advanced toward the troops of Procopius, and addressing the soldiers as his children and the sharers of his former toils, implored them to follow himself, who was as it were their parent, rather than that profligate adventurer and common robber. Many were thus induced to desert, and when Procopius gave battle to the imperial troops at Nacolia in Phrygia, Agilo, an officer of rank, and several of his men went over to the emperor in the heat of the action. Procopius, seeing all lost, fled on foot to the mountains with two companions, by whom he was treacherously seized next day, and delivered bound to the emperor. His head was instantly struck off, and the two traitors shared his fate. Judicial inquiries ensued; the rack was in constant use; the executioner was incessantly employed: neither age, sex, nor rank was spared, and the results of the victory of Nacolia were more direful than the most terrible civil war.

As nothing of very great importance in a political sense occurred for some years in the East, we will devote our pages henceforth to the actions of Valentinian.

The absence of the Roman armies and the intelligence of the death of Julian having inspirited the Alemans, they passed the Rhine in the beginning of January, 366, and proceeded to ravage Gaul in their usual manner. The counts Charietto and Severian were defeated and slain by them. But Jovinus, the master of the cavalry, having taken the command of the army destined to act against them, surprised and cut to pieces two of their divisions, and engaging the third in the vicinity of Châlons (*Catalauni*), defeated them after a well-contested action, with a loss of 6000 slain and 4000 wounded, that of the Romans being only twelve hundred men. For this victory Jovinus was, on his return to Paris, justly honoured with the consulate.

Some time after (368), an Alemannic chief, named Rando, surprised the city of Mentz (*Moguntiacum*), on the day of one of the Christian festivals, and carried away a great number of the inhabitants. Valentinian, resolved to take vengeance on the whole nation, ordered count Sebastian to invade their country from the south, with the armies of Italy

and Illyrieum, while he himself and his son Gratianus should cross the Rhine at the head of the troops of Gaul. They passed the river without opposition; as they advanced no enemy appeared; the deserted villages were burnt, and the cultivated lands laid waste. At length they learned that the enemy had occupied a lofty mountain, the north side of which alone was of easy ascent. Valentinian, having posted count Sebastian at that side to intercept the fugitives, gave the signal to advance, and the Roman soldiers, in spite of all impediments, won their way up the steep sides of the mountain. When they had attained the summit they charged the enemies vigorously, and drove them down the northern side, where they were intercepted and slaughtered by count Sebastian. Valentinian and his son then returned to Treves for the winter, and celebrated their victory by magnificent triumphal games. Instead of again invading Germany, the prudent emperor resolved to provide for the defence of Gaul, and he caused a chain of forts and castles to be constructed, chiefly along the left bank of the Rhine, from its source to the ocean. The Germans made various attempts to interrupt the works, especially those on the right bank of the river, and sometimes with success; but the emperor completed his design, and secured the tranquillity of Gaul for the remainder of his reign.

The coasts of Gaul and Britain were now infested by the invasions of the pirates of the North, who, united under the name of Saxons (that of the people of the neck of the Cimbrie peninsula), had long since commenced that series of plundering excursions which afterwards led to such important consequences. A large body of these freebooters having penetrated into Gaul (371), Severus, the master of the infantry, was sent with a considerable force to oppose them. The Saxons, when they beheld the number and the arms of the Romans, declined the combat, and offered to supply a select number of their youth for the Roman service, as the condition of a safe retreat. The treaty was concluded, the condition fulfilled, and the Saxons set out for the coast. But in a wooded valley on the way, a chosen body of Roman infantry was posted in ambush to attack them as they passed*. Some, however, of the soldiers rising before their time, the freebooters became aware of the treachery that was meditated, and stood on their defence. The Romans were on the

* "Ac licet," says Ammianus, "justus quidam arbiter rerum factum incusabit perfidum et deforme, pensato tamen negotio non fecit indigne manus latronum exitialem tandem, copia data, captam."

point of destruction, when a body of cuirassiers, who had been posted with the same design on another part of the road, hearing the din of combat, hastened to the spot, and the unfortunate Saxons, assailed in front and rear, were cut to pieces: all who escaped the sword were reserved for the sports of the amphitheatre. It is not necessary to express our disgust at this piece of treachery, but even in her best days Rome did not shrink from breach of faith and contempt of engagements.

The coasts of Britain suffered equally with those of Gaul from the inroads of the northern pirates, and this now wealthy and civilised island was in addition subject to the ravages of a domestic enemy; for the avarice of the military commanders causing them to defraud their soldiers of their pay and to sell discharges or exemptions from service, the discipline of the troops was at an end, and the highways were filled with robbers. The Picts and Scots, as the unsubdued natives of the northern part of the island were called, poured their savage hordes down into the now defenceless province, and ravaged it far and wide. The emperor, when intelligence of their devastations reached him, selected first Severus and then Jovinus for the command in Britain, but he finally committed it to count Theodosius, a Spaniard by birth and an officer of approved merit and capacity.

Theodosius landed at Sandwich (*Rutupiæ*), whence he advanced to London: he then led his troops against the barbarians and attacked and routed their scattered bands, recovering a large quantity of booty and captives. By publishing an amnesty he induced the soldiers who had deserted to return to their standards, and he speedily cleared the Roman part of the island of its northern invaders. He restored all the cities and fortresses that had suffered injury or decay. The province which he recovered from the enemy he named *Valentia*, from the emperor*. On his return to court (369) Theodosius was promoted to the dignity of master of the horse, and given the command on the Upper Danube, where he acted with his usual success against the Alemans. He was then chosen to suppress a revolt in Africa.

* "*Recuperatamque provinciam, quæ in ditionem concesserat hostium, ita reddiderat statui pristino, ut eodem referente et rectorem haberet legitimum, et Valentia deinde vocaretur arbitrio Principis velut ovanis.*" *Am. Mar. xxviii. 3.* This does not justify the language of Gibbon, that Theodosius "with a strong hand confined the trembling Caledonians to the northern angle of the island; and perpetuated, by the name and settlement of the new province of Valentia, the glories of the reign of Valentinian."

The military commandant in that province, count Romanus, was one of those officers, so common under all despotic governments, who, heedless of justice and of the welfare of the people, think only of gratifying their pride and avarice. Relying on the influence of his kinsman Remigius, the master of the offices, he set at nought the prayers and complaints of the provincials, and he suffered them to become the prey of the barbarians if they did not come up to his demands. The people of Tripolis, who had thus been abandoned to the Gætulians, ventured to send deputies with their complaints to the emperor, and the charge of examining into the state of the province was committed to the notary Palladius. But this man had been selected by the influence of Remigius, and consequently his report asserted the innocence of Romanus and the falsehood of the charges made by the Tripolitans. The deaths and mutilations of some of their most distinguished citizens, under a barbarous decree of the deceived emperor, ensued, and Romanus continued his career of tyranny and extortion till his excesses forced the people to declare for a Moorish prince, who had been driven into insurrection.

The name of this prince was Firmus, the son of Nabal. In a domestic quarrel, after the death of his father, he happened to kill one of his brothers; and Romanus, prompted by hatred or avarice, or it may be by a regard for justice, showed such a determination to punish him, that Firmus saw that he must submit to be executed or appeal to his sword. He chose the latter alternative; thousands flocked to his standard: Romanus proved unable to resist him, and the charge of reducing him was committed to the able Theodosius (373). The contest between this officer and Firmus resembled that between Metellus and Jugurtha, in the same country. The arts of the African were encountered with corresponding dissimulation; the Roman general, at the head of an expedite force of less than 4000 men, traversed the country in all directions, and a Moorish prince, with whom Firmus had sought refuge, resolved to imitate the conduct of Bocchus and obtain the favour of the victor by the surrender of the fugitive. Firmus, however, anticipated his treachery by a voluntary death.

The fate of Theodosius himself may here be told. He had committed Romanus to safe custody on his landing in Africa, and abundant evidence of that officer's guilt had been procured. But court-favour availed to procure delay; bribery brought forward friendly witnesses, and forgery produced favourable documents, and the final result was that the

guilty Romanus escaped with impunity, while the innocent Theodosius, after death had removed Valentinian, who knew his worth, was, through court-intrigue, seized and beheaded at Carthage, on a vague suspicion that he was grown too powerful for a subject! (376)

While Theodosius was engaged in the reduction of Africa, a war with the once formidable Quadans engaged the arms of Valentinian in person. In pursuance of his plan of securing the banks of the frontier-rivers by fortresses, the ground for one of them was marked out on what the Quadans claimed as their territory. On their complaint, Equitius, who commanded in Illyricum, suspended the works till he should have received further instructions from the emperor. His enemy Maximin, the tyrannic prefect of Gaul, seized this occasion for injuring him in the mind of Valentinian, and procuring the command of the province of Valeria (the scene of the dispute) for his own son Marcellinus. The passionate and credulous emperor was easily induced to comply with his desire, and that important command was entrusted to an inexperienced and insolent youth. On his arrival in the province, Marcellinus caused the works which Equitius had suspended to be resumed, and when Gabinius, the Quadan king, modestly remonstrated, he invited him to a banquet, affecting a willingness to comply with his wishes, and caused him as he was departing from it to be assassinated. The murder of their king exasperated the Quadans, and having procured the aid of a body of horse from their usual allies the Sarmatians, they crossed the Danube and invaded Pannonia. It was now the harvest-time, and the population were all engaged in their rural toils. The slaughter of the defenceless peasantry was therefore immense, and huge quantities of booty were carried over the Danube. The ravages of the invaders extended to the very walls of Sirmium. The two only legions which Equitius could bring into the field were cut to pieces. The Sarmatians, following the example of their allies, invaded Moesia, but the young Theodosius, who though only a youth, held the post of duke of that frontier, routed them in several encounters, and forced them to retire and sue for peace.

In the following spring (375) the emperor Valentinian quitted Treves, his ordinary residence, and at the head of the greater part of the troops of Gaul appeared on the banks of the Danube. He crossed that river, and having devastated the

Quadan country far and wide, repassed it without having lost a single man of his army. As he intended to return and complete the destruction of the Quadans in the following year, he fixed his winter quarters at a place named Bregilio, on the banks of the Danube, near the site of the modern city of Presburg. While he abode there he was waited on by ambassadors from that people, suing for peace in the humblest language. In his reply he gave a loose to his violent passions, reproaching the envoys and those who sent them, in the most opprobrious terms. The violence of his exertions caused him to burst a blood-vessel, and he fell back speechless into the arms of his attendants. He expired within a few hours (Nov. 17), in the fifty-fifth year of his age, and after a reign of twelve years wanting one hundred days.

Valentinian is praised as a brave soldier, a lover of justice, a man frugal, temperate and chaste in private life. He alleviated when he could the burdens of his subjects; he was a rigid maintainer of discipline in the army. Above all, he was tolerant in religion, and did not seek to impose his own faith on his subjects by force or by disqualifications. On the other hand, he was choleric and cruel; the slightest offences were punished by a barbarous death, and the sentence at times was passed in a tone of barbarous jocularity. He had two she-bears, which he named Gold-grain (*Mica aurea*) and Innocence. These animals, who were accustomed to tear human victims, were such favourites with him, that he caused their dens to be constructed near his own bed-chamber, and assigned them keepers, whose task was to foster their natural ferocity. We are not informed of the fate of Gold-grain, but Innocence, after a long course of service, was let loose in the woods.

Valens, Gratian, Valentinian II.

A.U. 1128-1131. A.D. 375-378.

The late emperor had in the fifth year of his reign associated in the empire with himself and his brother, his son Gratian, then a boy in his ninth year. This prince, who was now in his seventeenth year, was residing at Treves when the death of his father occurred. His absence emboldened two officers of rank, Merobaudes and Equitius, to make an attempt to advance their own interest by adding to the number

of the emperors; and having contrived to remove the Gallic troops, from whom they apprehended opposition, they brought to the camp Valentinian the half-brother of Gratian, a child only four years old, who was residing with his mother, the empress Justina, at a country-seat one hundred miles distant from Bregilio, and invested him with the purple. Gratian, a prudent and moderate prince, did not show any resentment at this act of assumption. He accepted his infant colleague, to whom he acted as a kind and attentive guardian. The portion of the empire assigned to the young emperor was Illyricum, Italy and Africa, and he and his mother fixed their residence at Milan.

Since the fall of Procopius the emperor Valens had reigned in security. The settlement of the thrones of Iberia and Armenia had caused some hostile demonstrations between him and the great Sapor; but the Roman was timid, and age had softened the energy of the Persian, and their differences were settled by negotiation. After the death of his brother, Valens found himself obliged to take the field in person against a formidable enemy, and the fall of the Roman empire is, with some appearance of reason, dated from this inauspicious period.

The great Gothic nation, whose steps we have traced from the North to the Euxine, consisted of two main stems, the Ostrogoths or East-goths, and the Visigoths, or West-goths. The monarch of the former, named Hermanric, had, according to the chroniclers of his nation, at the advanced age of eighty years, the period when most men have ceased from their labours, commenced a career of conquest which extended his dominion back to the shores of the Baltic. The kings of the Visigoths were obliged to renounce the royal title and be content with the humbler rank of judges; and Hermanric was the acknowledged monarch of Scythia. The aid given to Procopius having caused hostilities between him and the emperor Valens, the Gothic sovereign committed the conduct of the war to Athanaric, one of the Judges of the Visigoths; it was terminated by a treaty in the year 369, and the Goths remained tranquil till the year of the death of Valentinian, when the appearance of an enemy from the remote regions of the East precipitated them on the Roman empire.

The extensive plains of northern Asia, from the confines of Europe, or rather from those of the territory of the great Slavonian portion of the human family, to the shores of the

eastern ocean, have from time immemorial been the abode of two races of men. The one, known to the ancients by the name of Scythians, to the moderns by that of Turks, has always occupied the western portion of these plains, and it is of this people that historians speak when they narrate the wars and conquests of the Scythians. They are tall, well-formed and fair, and belong to what is termed the Caucasian or Indo-German portion of mankind. The other race, long unknown to the ancients, are termed Mongols; their original seats are to the east of those of the Turks; and their physical qualities, such as their extreme ugliness, their thin beards, the great breadth between their eyes, and other marks, indicate them to belong to a different portion of the human race.

To the south of the seats of the Mongols lies the extensive empire of China, the inhabitants of which appear to belong to the Mongol family. The annals of this people tell of numerous wars between them and their barbarous kinsmen of the north. Some time before the period of which we write the arms of China had prevailed; the power of the Mongols had been broken, and a large portion of their warriors had, with their flocks and herds, moved westwards in quest of new settlements. The Huns, as that portion of the Mongols of whom we treat were named, advanced till they encountered the Alans, who dwelt between the Volga and the Don, or Tanais, on the banks of which latter stream the forces of the two nations engaged. The king of the Alans was slain, and victory crowned the arms of the Huns. A portion of the vanquished people migrated, the rest submitted and were incorporated with the conquerors, who then entered the territories of the Gothic monarch (375), whose tyranny had made him odious to the greater part of his subjects, and caused them to view the progress of the Huns with indifference. Some time before, on the occasion of the desertion of a chief of the Roxolans, Hermanric had caused his innocent wife to be torn to pieces by wild horses, and her brothers now seized the occasion for vengeance. Hermanric perished by their daggers, and his son and successor Withimer fell in battle against the Huns. The greater part of the nation of the Ostrogoths forthwith submitted; but the more generous portion, with their infant sovereign Witheric, and led by two brave chiefs named Saphrax and Aletheus, penetrated to the banks of the Niester, which Athanaric occupied at the head of the war-

riors of the Visigoths. The Hunnish hordes soon appeared, and by causing a large body of their cavalry to ford the river by moonlight and surround the Goths, they forced them to retire and seek the shelter of the hills. Athanaric had arranged a new plan of defence; but his people had lost courage, and under the guidance of their two other Judges, Fritigern and Alavivus, they approached the banks of the Danube, seeking the protection of the Roman emperor (376).

The Gothic envoys proceeded to Antioch, where Valens was then residing. Their request was taken into consideration by the emperor and his council; and it was decided to give them a settlement within the bounds of the empire, on the condition of their delivering up their arms before they passed the river, and suffering their children to be separated from them and dispersed through the cities of Asia to serve as hostages, and be brought up in Roman manners. Under the pressure of necessity the Goths consented to these terms, and orders for their transportation were then issued to the imperial officers. As the stream of the Danube was rapid, swollen, and a mile in breadth, many perished in the passage; but we are assured that at the least two hundred thousand Gothic warriors, with their wives, children and slaves, were safely landed on the southern bank of the river. The hostages were delivered according to agreement, but to retain their arms they consented to prostitute their wives and children, and to sacrifice their most precious possessions; and the lust and avarice of the imperial officers caused them to endanger the peace of the empire for their gratification. A powerful Gothic army thus occupied the hills and plains of Lower Mœsia. Soon after, Saphrax and Aletheus with their Ostrogoths, appeared on the banks of the Danube imploring a passage; but Valens, now become alarmed, dismissed their envoys with a refusal.

Prudence and policy equally counseled that so formidable a host as that of the Visigoths should have been managed delicately, and the utmost care been taken to avoid giving them any cause of irritation. But Lupicinus and Maximus, the governors of the province, thought only of indulging their avarice. The vilest food, such as the flesh of dogs, was supplied to them; to obtain a pound of bread they had to give a slave, and to pay ten pounds of silver for a small quantity of flesh meat; and when all their property had thus been expended, want impelled them to the sale of their sons and daughters. Their

patience was at length exhausted, and their menaces alarmed Lupicinus and Maximus, who therefore resolved to disperse them along the frontiers without delay. With this view they drew around them all the troops they could assemble, and as they in consequence removed those that were watching the Ostrogoths, that people seized the opportunity of crossing the river on rafts and in boats, and encamped, unshackled by conditions, on the Roman territory. The Visigoths, conducted by Fritigern, in compliance with the orders of the Roman general, advanced to Marcianopolis, seventy miles inland from the Danube. Here, however, they were refused a market, and a quarrel in consequence arose between them and the Roman soldiers, in which some blood was spilt. Lupicinus, who was at the time entertaining the Gothic chiefs, when informed of this event, gave orders for their guards to be slain. Fritigern, hearing the noise, drew his sword, and calling on his companions to follow him, forced his way through the crowd and rejoined his countrymen without the walls. Their banners were instantly raised, and their horns sounded, according to their custom, for war. Lupicinus, at the head of what troops he could collect, marched out against them. The engagement took place about nine miles from Marcianopolis, and it terminated in the total defeat of the Romans. The unprotected country soon felt the effects of the Gothic victory, the husbandmen were massacred or enslaved, the villages were plundered and burnt. A body of Goths in the Roman service, who were quartered at Hadrianople, were driven into insurrection by the imprudent violence of the governor of that town. They joined their victorious countrymen, and their united forces laid siege to the city. But the Goths knew nothing of sieges, and Fritigern drew them off, declaring that "he was at peace with stone-walls." The slaves who wrought in the gold-mines of Thrace fled to the invaders, and revealed to them all the recesses in the mountains in which the inhabitants had concealed themselves with their cattle and property. Enormities of every kind were perpetrated on the unhappy people of the country (377).

To check the excesses of the barbarians, Valens sent the troops of the East under his generals Trajan and Profuturus, with whom Richomer, count of the domestics in the western empire, united his forces, and was resolved to seek out and attack the enemy. The Goths, who had repassed Mount Hæmus, were now encamped in the plain adjacent to the most

southern of the mouths of the Danube. When the approach of the Roman army was discerned, Fritigern summoned all the scattered warriors to his standard, and an action was fought, which after lasting from dawn till dusk, terminated in the decisive advantage of neither party. For the seven following days the Goths remained within their camp, which was secured, according to the custom of their race, by a strong circuit of waggons. The plan of the Roman generals was to confine them to the angle which they occupied, till famine, by its sure operation, should have reduced them. But while with this view they were fortifying their lines, they learned that Fritigern had formed a league with the Ostrogoths and had even induced a large number of the Huns and Alans to join his standard. The Romans, fearful of being surrounded, abandoned the siege of the Gothic camp and retired, and the liberated Goths rapidly spread their devastations as far as the Hellespont (378).

Valens had early sought the aid of his nephew and colleague Gratian, and that gallant young emperor was preparing to lead the forces of the West to the deliverance of the East, when the Alemans, learning his design, and perhaps acting in concert with the Goths, passed the Rhine to the number of forty thousand. The troops which had been sent on to Pannonia were recalled, and Gratian, guided by the military experience and wisdom of his general Nanienus and of Mellobaudes king of the Franks, and count of the domestics, gave the barbarians battle at Colmar (*Argentaria*) in Alsace. The victory of the Romans was decisive, the king of the Alemans was slain, and of their entire host not more than five thousand men escaped from the field of battle. Gratian then invaded their country, and forced them to sue for peace.

While Gratian was thus inspiring his subjects with admiration and respect for their youthful emperor, Valens had reached Constantinople, where, urged by the clamours of the populace, and inspired by the recent successes of some of his generals, he resolved to assume in person the conduct of the war against the barbarians, and he set out at the head of a large army. The Goths had proposed to occupy the defiles on the road from that city to Hadrianople, but the march of the imperial troops was conducted with so much skill and celerity, that they reached the latter place unimpeded, and secured themselves in a strong camp beneath its walls. A council was held to decide on future operations. Count Richomer,

whom Gratian had despatched with intelligence of his victories, and with assurances of his speedy approach, urged strongly the prudence of waiting for the arrival of the Gallic legions; his advice was seconded by Victor, the master of the horse, a Sarmatian by birth, but a cautious and prudent man. On the other hand, count Sebastian and the court-flatterers advised against sharing with a colleague the glory of a certain victory. Their counsels, aided by the jealousy of Valens, prevailed. While preparations were being made for battle, a Christian presbyter arrived as the envoy of Fritigern. The public letters of which he was the bearer, craved that Thrace, with all its cattle and corn, should be given to his people as the condition of a perpetual peace; but he was also commissioned to deliver a private letter, in which Fritigern writing as a friend said that he should never be able to bring his countrymen to agree to any terms unless the imperial army were close at hand to daunt them by its presence. The object of the wily Goth was to bring on a speedy engagement.

At dawn the following day (Aug. 9) the legions of the East were in motion, the imperial treasure and insignia being left within the walls of Hadrianople. Toward noon the wagon-fence of the enemy, twelve miles from the city, was discerned. The Romans began to form their line of battle; the Goths, as the troops of Aletheus and Saphrax were not yet come up, sent again illusive proposals of peace, and while time was thus gained, the effects of the heat of the burning sun were augmented by the Goths setting fire to the grass and wood of the surrounding country. The Romans also suffered from want of food, and at length the arrival of Saphrax and Aletheus put an end to all negotiation, and the battle commenced. The horse of the Roman left wing penetrated to the enemy's line of waggon, but being unsupported was overthrown and scattered, and the foot being thus left without protection, and crowded into too narrow a space to be able to use their arms to advantage, were crushed by the masses of the enemy. After a long but fruitless resistance, they fled in all directions. The emperor sought refuge among the troops named Lancearians and Mattiarans, from their weapons, who still stood their ground. Count Trajan crying out that all was lost if the emperor were not saved, count Victor hastened to the spot with the reserve of Batavians, but the emperor was nowhere to be found, and the furious onset of the Goths soon forced all to provide for their own safety. A

moonless night terminated the rout, and aided the escape of the vanquished Romans. Since the day of Cannæ no such calamity had befallen the Roman arms. Scarcely a third part of the army quitted the field. Among the slain were the counts Trajan, Sebastian, Valerian and Equitius, and six-and-thirty other officers of rank.

The fate of Valens himself was never exactly known. Some said that at nightfall he fell mortally wounded by an arrow, and that his body, confounded among those of the common soldiers, could never be recognised. Others asserted, that when he was wounded, some of his guards and eunuchs conveyed him to a neighbouring cottage, and while they were engaged in trying to dress his wound, the enemy surrounded the house, and being unable to force the doors, heaped straw and wood against them, and setting fire to these materials, burned the house and all within it. One of the guards who escaped out of a window survived to tell the story.

Such was the fate of the emperor Valens, in the fiftieth year of his age and the fourteenth of his reign. He is said to have been a firm friend, a rigid maintainer of both civil and military order, a mild ruler of the provinces. He was also moderately liberal. On the other hand, he is charged with avarice, indolence, severity bordering on cruelty; and it is added, that though affecting a great regard to justice, he would never allow the judges to give any sentence but such as he wished. In religion he was an Arian, and the Catholics underwent some persecution during his reign.

On the morning after the battle, the Goths, eager to possess the wealth of which they knew it to be the *dépôt*, surrounded the walls of Hadrianople. The soldiers and camp-followers, who had been shut out of the town, fought with desperate resolution, and kept them at bay for the space of five hours; and the imprudent slaughter of three hundred men who went over to them, showed that safety only lay in valour and constancy. A violent tempest at last forced the Goths to return to their waggon-camp. They again had recourse to negotiation, and then tried the way of treachery. Some of the guards had deserted to them, and they induced these men to return to the city as if they had made their escape, and, if admitted, they were to set fire to a part of the town, in order that while the besieged were engaged in quenching the flames the Goths might seize the opportunity of breaking in at some unguarded place. The traitors were admitted, but the discrepancy in their ac-

count of the designs of the enemy caused them to be put to the torture, and the truth was thus discovered. The Goths in the morning renewed the assault, but the defence was resolute as ever, and they retired in the evening accusing one another of madness in not attending to the counsel of Fritigern and avoiding all dealings with stone-walls. They departed the next day, and directed their course for the capital. They plundered and wasted all the circumjacent country, but they feared the strength of the walls and the magnitude of the population of the city. While they were insulting its strength, a squadron of Saracenic light-horse, which had lately arrived, issued from one of the gates and attacked them. The conflict was well-maintained and dubious; but when the Goths beheld an Arab warrior, half-naked, with his long hair hanging about him, raise a hoarse and dismal chant, and drawing his dagger rush into the midst of their ranks, and putting his mouth to the throat of one whom he had slain, suck his blood, they were filled with horror and disgust. They shortly after withdrew with their booty to the northern provinces, and spread their ravages as far as the Adriatic.

Meantime an act of barbarous, and therefore questionable policy, was put in practice by Julius, who commanded beyond Mount Taurus. Apprehending danger from the Gothic youth who were dispersed in the various towns and cities, he, with the consent of the senate of Constantinople, issued orders to their commanders, who happened to be all Romans (a thing, as Ammianus observes, very rare in those days), to assemble them all on a certain day, as if to receive their promised pay, and then to slaughter them. The orders were executed; the Goths were collected unarmed in the squares of the towns, the avenues were guarded, and from the tops of the adjacent buildings the soldiers overwhelmed them with their weapons*.

Gratian, Valentinian II. and Theodosius.

A.U. 1131-1136. A.D. 378-383.

Gratian had been on his march to aid his uncle when he

* Zosimus (who is followed by Gibbon) says that they were the Gothic youths who had been delivered up to Valens. Ammianus seems to speak of them as Goths in the Roman service. This writer's valuable history ends at this point.

heard of the defeat and death of that ill-fated prince. He forthwith halted, and taking into serious consideration the state of the empire, and knowing that the West would demand his own undivided attention, he saw clearly the necessity of selecting some one in whose character the general and the statesman should be united, to take the charge of the East. Acting on the wisdom which experience had taught, he resolved that the person selected should be his colleague in the empire, and not a subordinate officer, and the choice which he made was alike honourable to himself and its object.

The person selected by Gratian for the high dignity of emperor of the East was the son of that Theodosius, who only three years before had been put to death by his own authority. The younger Theodosius had on that occasion craved leave to resign his command, and having obtained it, he had retired to his native country Spain, and fixed his residence on his paternal estate at Coco, between Valladolid and Segovia. He there divided his time between the town and the country, and the care and the improvement of his property formed his chief occupation. While thus engaged he was summoned to receive the purple, with which he was invested by Gratian in the city of Sirmium (Jan. 19, 379), amid the favouring acclamations of the soldiers and the people. Theodosius was now in the thirty-third year of his age; his person and countenance displayed manly vigour and dignity, and time proved that the qualities of his heart corresponded to those outward charms which captivated the vulgar. No man ever attained to empire in a more honourable manner; the slightest vestige of intrigue or manœuvre is not to be discerned; his country was in danger, and a noble-minded prince summoned to its aid the man deemed most capable of delivering it from its enemies: for we must not refuse the meed of praise to Gratian, who could entrust such power to a man whose father had been murdered in his name.

Theodosius did not venture to lead the dispirited troops of the East into the field against the Goths. He fixed his own residence at Thessalonica; and caused the fortifications of the other towns to be strengthened. By frequent sallies the soldiers were taught to encounter the barbarians; gradually small armies were formed, and by well-concerted operations victories were gained. This Fabian policy was aided by the dissensions which naturally broke out among the various

bodies of the barbarians when the able Fritigern was removed by death. A Gothic chief of royal blood, named Modar, entered the service of Theodosius, who gave him a high military command, and he surprised and cut to pieces a large body of his countrymen. Athanaric, who had emerged from his retirement after the death of Fritigern, and prevailed on the greater part of the Visigoths to submit to his rule, was now advanced in years and disposed to peace. He therefore listened to the proposals of Theodosius, and concluded a treaty. The emperor advanced to meet him at some distance from Constantinople, and Athanaric accompanied him to that city. The Gothic prince was amazed at its strength and magnificence, but the change in his mode of life probably proved fatal to him, for he died not long after his arrival. He was interred by the emperor with the utmost magnificence, and a stately monument was raised to his memory. His whole army entered the imperial service; the other chiefs gradually agreed to treaties with the emperor; and thus within a space of little more than four years after the death of Valens (382), the victors of Hadrianople had become the subjects of the empire. The settlements assigned them were in the provinces of Mœsia and the cis-Danubic Dacia, which had been laid desolate by their ravages.

During all this time the Ostrogoths were far away in the north among the tribes of Germany. They at length (386) appeared once more on the banks of the Lower Danube, their numbers augmented by German and Sarmatian, or perhaps Hunnish auxiliaries, and proposed to renew their devastation of the Roman provinces. Promotus, the general of the opposite frontier, had recourse to stratagem against them. He sent over spies, who stipulated to betray the Roman army, assuring the barbarians that if they crossed the river in the dead of the night they might surprise it when buried in sleep. Accordingly, on a moonless night, the Goths embarked their warriors in three thousand *monoxyls* or canoes, and pushed for the opposite shore; but when they approached it, they found it guarded for the length of two miles and a half by a triple line of vessels; and while they were struggling to force their way through them, a fleet of galleys came, with stream and oars, down the river, and assailed them. The resistance which they were able to offer was slight; their king or general Odothæus, and numbers of their warriors, were slain or drowned,

and they were finally obliged to solicit the clemency of the victors*. Theodosius, who was at hand, concluded a treaty with them, by which they engaged to become his subjects. Seats were assigned them in Lydia and Phrygia, where they were governed by their own hereditary chiefs under the supreme authority of the emperor. A body of 40,000 Goths, named *Federati*, or allies, henceforth formed a part of the army of the East, distinguished by gold collars, higher pay, and various privileges.

We will now turn to the West and the emperor Gratian.

This prince, whose character was by nature feeble and gentle, had been fostered, as it were, into greatness by the wisdom and the counsels of the able preceptors with whom his father had surrounded him†. In the acts of the early years of his reign, though *he* was the ostensible agent, *they* were the secret directors, and the youth, whose chief virtue was ductility to good, obtained the fame due to higher qualities. But when death or other causes had removed these able and virtuous advisers, the amiable but indolent prince fell under the guidance of men of a different character, to whom he entrusted the affairs of the state, while he devoted himself to the delights of the chase, in which he bent the bow and flung the dart with the skill of a Commodus. The offices and advantages of the court and the provinces were set to sale, and the minds of the subjects were thus alienated; but this would have signified little had Gratian been careful to retain the attachment of the soldiers, which his conduct, when directed by worthy advisers, had won. This, however, he lost by his own imprudence. He had placed a body of Alans among his guards, and charmed with their dexterity in the use of his favourite weapons, he committed to them exclusively the defence of his person. He used even to appear in public in their peculiar

* There is some confusion in this account. Zosimus (iv. 35. and 38, 39) makes the Goths to be twice defeated (A.D. 383 and 386) on the same river and by the same person, and in the same manner as it would appear. The Gothic general in the former he calls Odotheus, the same with the Odothæus of Claudian (De iv. Cons. Hon. 626) in the second. We cannot, by the way, agree with Gibbon that this was Aletheus.

One of the most improbable circumstances in the narrative is that the Goths should not have discerned the Roman shipping, for the Danube is nowhere too wide to be seen across.

† Ausonius, the poet (more properly versifier) of Bordeaux, was one of his tutors. Gratian honoured him with the consulate in 379. We cannot see why Gibbon should call Ausonius "a professed pagan."

national dress, to the grief and indignation of the legionary soldiers, even the Germans viewing with horror the Scythian costume.

While such was the temper of the troops a revolt broke out in the army of Britain (383), and a person named Maximus was there proclaimed emperor. This man, who was a native of Spain and the fellow-soldier of Theodosius, was residing in Britain, but without civil or military rank of any importance. His abilities and his virtues are recognised, but whence his influence arose we are uninformed; and if we may credit his own positive assertion, his dignity was forced on him. He plainly saw that he could not recede; and as the British youth crowded to his standard, he passed over to Gaul at the head of a large army*. The troops of Gaul all declared for him, and Gratian fled from Paris to Lyons with only three hundred horse. The gates of all the towns on his way were closed against him, and the treacherous governor of Lyons amused him with promises till those sent in pursuit of him arrived, and he was slain as he rose from supper (Aug. 25). His brother Valentinian applied, but in vain, for his body. Mellobaudes, the Frank king and Roman general, shared the fate of his master; but Maximus, who was now acknowledged by the whole West, could boast that no other blood was shed except in the field.

Theodosius, Valentinian II. and Maximus.

A.U. 1136-1141. A.D. 383-388.

The late revolution had been so sudden that Theodosius had been perhaps uninformed of it until it was accomplished; and ere he could determine how to act he was waited on by an embassy from the usurper headed by his chamberlain, a man advanced in years, and, as the historian observes, to the praise of Maximus, not a eunuch. The envoy justified the conduct of his master, asserting his ignorance of the murder of Gratian: he then proceeded to give Theodosius the op-

* A large emigration of Britons to Armorica is placed in this time, to which belongs the legend of St. Ursula and her virgins. These are said to have been 11,000 noble and 60,000 plebeian maidens, the destined brides of the emigrants, who mistaking their way, went up the Rhine and were massacred at Cologne by the Huns—who were not there.

tion of peace or war. Gratitude and honour urged the emperor to avenge the fate of his benefactor, but prudence suggested that the issue of a contest with the troops of Gaul, Spain, and Britain was doubtful, and that the barbarians, who hovered on the frontiers, would be ready to pour into the empire when its forces should have been wasted in civil conflict. He, therefore, lent a favourable ear to the proposals of Maximus, and acknowledged him as a colleague, carefully, however, stipulating for the security of Valentinian in his share of the empire. The images of the three imperial colleagues were, according to usage, exhibited to the people.

The empire now remained at rest for a space of four years, but at length (387) its repose was disturbed by the ambition of Maximus: for not content with his own ample portion, this fortunate rebel cast an eye of cupidity on the dominions of Valentinian, where many were disaffected on account of religion. Having extorted large sums of money from his subjects, he took a great number of barbarians into pay; and when an ambassador from Valentinian came to his court, he persuaded him to accept the services of a part of his troops for an imminent Pannonian war. The envoy himself was their guide through the passes of the Alps; Maximus secretly followed at the head of a larger body, and a precipitate flight from Milan to Aquileia alone assured the safety of Valentinian and his mother. Not deeming themselves secure even in that strong city, they embarked in a vessel, and sailing round the Grecian peninsula, landed at Thessalonica*, whither Theodosius hastened to visit them. He deliberated with his council as to what were best to be done; the same reasons as before urged him to pause before he should engage in a civil war, and the injuries of Valentinian might possibly have gone unrevenged had they not found an advocate in the beauty of his sister Galla. By the directions of her mother, this princess cast herself at the feet of Theodosius, and with tears implored his aid. Few hearts are proof against the tears of beauty—that of Theodosius at least was not; his empress was dead, and his aid was assured if the lovely supplicant would consent to share the throne of the East. The condition was accepted, the nuptials were celebrated, and the royal bridegroom then prepared to take the field. Large bodies of Huns

* Gibbon's account of their voyage is more suited to epic poetry than to history.

and Alans crowded to the standard of Theodosius, who found Maximus encamped near Siscia, on the banks of the Save. The light cavalry of the barbarians flung themselves into that deep and rapid river the moment they reached it, and routed the troops which guarded the opposite bank. Next morning a general action ensued, which terminated in the submission of the surviving troops of Maximus, who fled to Aquileia, whither he was rapidly followed by Theodosius. The gates were burst open; the unfortunate Maximus was dragged into the presence of the victor, who, having reproached him with his misdeeds, delivered him to the vengeance of the soldiers, by whom his head was struck off. His son Victor, whom he had given the rank of Cæsar and left behind him in Gaul, was put to death by count Arbogast, one of Theodosius's generals, by the order of that emperor, and the whole of the West was thus subjected to the rule of Valentinian. The generous Theodosius compensated those who had suffered by the oppression of Maximus, and he assigned an income to the mother of that ill-fated prince, and provided for the education of his daughters.

Theodosius and Valentinian II.

A.U. 1141-1145. A.D. 388-392.

Theodosius, after his victory, remained three years in Italy to regulate the affairs of the West for his juvenile colleague. In the spring of the year 389 he made a triumphal entrance into the ancient capital of the empire, but his usual abode was the palace of Milan.

While Theodosius was residing in Italy (390) an unhappy event occurred, which casts almost the only shade over his fair fame. In the city of Thessalonica an eminent charioteer of the circus conceived an impure affection for a beautiful boy, one of the slaves of Botheric, the commander of the garrison: to punish his insolence Botheric cast him into prison. On the day of the games, the people, with whom he was a great favorite, enraged at his absence, rose in insurrection, and as the garrison was then very small, they massacred Botheric and his principal officers, and dragged their bodies about the streets. Theodosius, who was of a choleric temper, was filled with fury when he heard of this atrocious deed. His first resolution was to take a bloody revenge; the efforts

of the bishops then led him to thoughts of clemency, but the arguments of his minister Ruffinus induced him finally to expedite an order for military execution. He then attempted to recall the order, but it was too late. The people of Thessalonica were in the name of the emperor invited to the games of the circus. Their love of amusement overcoming their fear of punishment, they hastened to it in crowds; when the place was full, the soldiers, who were posted for the purpose, received the signal, and an indiscriminate massacre ensued. The lowest computation gives the number of those slain as seven thousand.

The archbishop of Milan at this time was the intrepid Ambrose. When he heard of the bloody deed he retired to the country, whence he wrote to the emperor to say that he had been warned in a vision not to offer the oblation in his name or presence, and advising him not to think of receiving the Eucharist with his blood-stained hands. Theodosius acknowledged and bewailed his offence, and after some time proceeded to the cathedral to perform his devotions; but Ambrose met him at the porch, opposed his entrance, and insisted on the necessity of a public penance. Theodosius submitted, and the lord of the Roman world, laying aside his imperial habit, appeared in the posture of a suppliant in the midst of the church of Milan, with tears soliciting the pardon of his sin. After a penance of eight months he was restored to the communion of the faithful.

To the cruelty of Theodosius on this occasion may be opposed his clemency some time before to the people of Antioch. This lively licentious people, being galled by an increase of taxation (387), flung down, dragged through the streets, and broke the images of Theodosius and his family. The governor of the province sent to court information of this act of treason; the Antiochenes despatched envoys to testify their repentance. After a space of twenty-four days two officers of high rank arrived to declare the will of the emperor. Antioch was to be degraded from its rank and made a village under the jurisdiction of Laodicea; all its places of amusement were to be shut up, the distribution of corn to be stopt, and the guilty to be inquired after and punished. A tribunal was erected in the market-place, the most wealthy citizens were laid in chains and their houses exposed to sale, when monks and hermits descended in crowds from the mountains, and at their intercession one of the officers agreed to return

to court and learn the present disposition of the emperor. The anger of the generous Theodosius had subsided ere he arrived, and a full and free pardon was readily accorded to the repentant city.

Valentinian, after the death of his mother and the departure of Theodosius, fixed his abode in Gaul. His troops were commanded by count Arbogast, a Frank by birth, who had held a high rank in the service of Gratian, after whose death he had passed to that of Theodosius. Aware of the weakness of his young sovereign, the ambitious barbarian raised his thoughts to empire. He corrupted the troops, he gave the chief commands to his countrymen, he surrounded the prince with his creatures, and Valentinian found himself little better than a prisoner in the palace of Vienne. He sent to inform Theodosius of his situation ; but impatient of delay, he summoned Arbogast to his presence, and delivered him a paper containing his dismissal from his posts. "You have not given me my authority, and you cannot take it away," was the reply of the general, and he tore the paper and cast it on the ground. Valentinian snatched a sword from one of the guards, but he was prevented from using it. A few days after he was privately strangled, and a report was spread that he had died by his own hand (May 15, 392).

Theodosius.

A.U. 1145-1148. A.D. 392-395.

Arbogast, deeming it more prudent to reign under the name of another than to assume the purple himself, selected for his imperial puppet a rhetorician named Eugenius, who had been his secretary, and whom he had raised to the rank of master of the offices. An embassy was despatched to Theodosius to lament the unfortunate accident of the death of Valentinian, and to pray him to acquiesce in the choice of the armies and people of the West. Theodosius acted with his usual caution ; he dismissed the ambassadors with presents and with an ambiguous answer ; but he was secretly swayed by the tears of his wife, and resolved to avenge the death of her brother. After devoting two years to his preparations for this hazardous war, he at length (394) put himself at the head of his troops and directed his march for Italy. Arbo-

gast, taking warning by the errors of Maximus, contracted his line of defence, and abandoning the northern provinces and leaving unguarded the passes of the Julian Alps, encamped his troops under the walls of Aquileia. Theodosius, on emerging from the mountains, made a furious assault on the fortified camp of the enemy, in which ten thousand of his Gothic troops perished. At nightfall he retired baffled to the adjacent hills, where he passed a sleepless night, while the camp of the enemy rang with rejoicings. Arbogast, having secretly sent a large body of troops to get into the rear of the emperor, prepared to assail him in the morning (Sept. 6). But the leaders of these troops assured Theodosius of their allegiance; and in the engagement a sudden tempest from the Alps blew full in the faces of those of the enemy; and their superstition leading them to view in it the hand of Heaven, they flung down their arms and submitted. Eugenius was taken and put to death; Arbogast, after wandering some days through the mountains, perished by his own hand.

Theodosius survived his victory only five months. Though he was not more than fifty years of age, indulgence had undermined his constitution, and he died of dropsy at Milan (Jan. 17, 395), leaving his dominions to his two sons Arcadius and Honorius.

The character of the great Theodosius is one which it is gratifying to contemplate. Called from a private station to empire, he was still the same in principle and conduct; and, the surest evidence of native greatness of soul, he remained unchanged by prosperity. He was an affectionate and faithful husband to both his wives, a fond parent, a generous and kind relation, an affable and agreeable companion, and a steady friend. As a sovereign, he was a lover of justice, a wise and benevolent legislator, an able and successful general. His defects were too slavish a submission to some intolerant ecclesiastics, which led to the enactment of persecuting laws against heretics and pagans; a violence of temper which we have seen exemplified in the massacre of Thessalonica; a love of indolence and an over-fondness for the pleasures of the table, which brought him to a premature death, to the great calamity of the empire.

The reign of Theodosius forms an epoch in the history of the Roman empire. He was the last who ruled over the whole empire, and it was in his time that the ancient system of religion, under which Rome had risen, flourished, and com-

menced, at least, her decline, was finally and permanently suppressed. His reign was also the last in which Rome appeared with any remnant of her original dignity on the scene of the world. It will surely not be accounted impiety or superstition, if we say that the eloquent appeals and lamentations of the advocates for the old religion were not without foundation; and that in the order of Providence, Rome's greatness had been indissolubly united with her Pontifices, Augurs and Vestals. Such seems undeniably to have been the fact, the cause is probably inscrutable.

If we credit the complaints of contemporary writers, luxury was continually on the increase, and manners became more depraved every day. These statements are, however, to be received with caution; and how either luxury or depravity could exceed that under the successors of Augustus, it is not easy to discern. Property had of late years been somewhat more secure from the rapacity of the court, and the terrors of the barbarians were as yet too remote to produce that recklessness which consumes today what it is not certain of possessing tomorrow. The censors in fact are either splenetic pagans, eager to cast a slur on the new faith, or christian ascetics, who viewed all indulgence with a jaundiced eye. We are very far from saying that the morals of this period were pure, or at all comparable with those of modern Europe; we only doubt if they were worse than those of the times of Tiberius and Nero.

A striking proof, however, was given at this time, that the thews and sinews of the Roman soldier were no longer what they had been in the days of the republic. The infantry craved and obtained permission to lay aside their helmets and corselets, as oppressing them with their extreme weight. Even future misfortunes could not induce them to resume these arms, and this among other causes contributed to the speedy downfall of the empire.

Literature continued to share in the general decline. Poetry might be regarded as extinct; history has only to present the name of Ammianus Marcellinus, who however among the historians of the empire stands next in rank to Tacitus, though at a very long interval. The Sophists, that is those to whom the manner was every thing, the matter of comparatively little importance, were the class of literary men held in most esteem. Orations, panegyrics, public or private epistles, in which the absence of fruit is sought to be concealed by the abundance of foliage and flowers, form the store

of these men's compositions. The most distinguished among them was Libanius of Antioch, the friend of both Julian and Theodosius, a large portion of whose writings still exist. Julian himself occupies no mean place among the Sophists. His letters, from his station in society, are far more important and interesting than those of Libanius.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Suppression of Paganism.—Religion of the fourth century.—State of morals.—The Donatists.—The Arians.—Other heretics.—Ecclesiastical constitution.—Fathers of the Church.—The Manichæans.

As the reign of Theodosius was the period of the complete fall of paganism and final triumph of the Christian faith, we will here interrupt our narrative of political events, and briefly relate the victories of the church over heathenism and heresy, and portray its external and internal condition.

When Constantine embraced the Christian religion, he left the ancient system of the Roman state undisturbed; toward the end of his reign, however, he issued edicts for the demolition of heathen temples, and prohibited sacrifices. Constantius was more hostile to heathenism than his father had been, and he executed the laws against it with great severity, even punishing capitally those guilty of the crime of offering sacrifice to idols. The absurd and fruitless efforts of Julian in its favour have been related, and the humane and enlightened toleration of Jovian and Valentinian have been praised. But Theodosius (much less Grätian) had not strength or enlargement of mind to resist or refute the arguments of the advocates of intolerance, and in their time the veneration of the tutelar deities of ancient Rome was treated as a crime.

The preservation of a pure monotheism being the main object of the law of Moses, its prohibitions against idolatry are numerous and severe; but the Christian religion, relying on its internal worth and its utter incompatibility with idolatry, is less emphatic on that subject. The habit, however, of confounding it with the Mosaic law had become so strong, and the opinion of the gods of the heathen being evil spirits, and not mere creatures of imagination, so prevalent, that the worship of them was held to be the highest insult to the ma-

jesty of the Creator, and the sovereign who suffered impious rites to be performed was regarded as participating in the guilt. Yielding to these considerations, Gratian on his accession refused to receive the insignia of a Pontifex Maximus, which even the most zealous of his predecessors had not rejected, and he seized on the sacerdotal revenues for the uses of the church or state, and abolished all the honours and immunities of the heathen priesthods. The image and altar of Victory, which were placed in the senate-house, had been removed by Constantine and restored by Julian. As the majority of the senate still adhered to the old religion of the state, the tolerant Valentinian had suffered it to remain undisturbed; but his more zealous son ordered it to be again removed. A deputation of the senate, sent on this occasion, was refused an audience by the emperor. The year after his death another deputation waited on his brother Valentinian; it was headed by Symmachus, the prefect of the city, a pontiff and augur, a man of noble birth, and of distinguished eloquence and unstained virtue. He was opposed by Ambrose, archbishop of Milan, and the prayer of the Roman senate was rejected. When Theodosius was at Rome* he called on the senate to choose between the two religions; and the majority of that body, warned by the fate of Symmachus, who had recently been sent into exile, voted in accordance with the wishes of the emperor. Pretended conversions became numerous, the temples were deserted and the churches filled with worshipers, and the religion under which Rome had flourished for twelve centuries ceased for ever. Respect probably for the dignity of the city caused the temples to be spared and left to the operation of natural decay; but in the provinces no such delicacy was observed, and many Christian prelates, such as Martin of Tours, Marcellus of Apamea, and Theophilus of Alexandria, headed holy crusades for the destruction of the abodes of the idols; and many a stately edifice, the pride of architecture, was thus consigned to untimely ruin. A few escaped destruction by being converted into Christian churches. In effect, the fate of the temples seems in general to have depended on the good sense or fanaticism of the bishop of the diocese in which they stood.

The edicts which Theodosius put forth against sacrifices

* Most probably after his victory over Maximus, though both Zosimus and Prudentius place it after that over Eugenius.

and other heathen rites having been frequently eluded, he at length (392) published one which breathes the very spirit of intolerance*. By this he forbids all persons, no matter what their rank, to offer any sacrifice whatever, or even to suspend garlands, burn incense, or place lights before the domestic deities of Roman religion, the Genius, the Lar and the Penates. The penalty was the forfeiture of the house or estate in which the rites had been performed, or if these were the property of another person, a fine of twenty-five pounds weight of gold. Prohibited thus in either its public or private exercise, heathenism gradually died away. Its last lingering footprints appeared in remote villages†; and in the reign of the grandson of Theodosius it even was doubted (but without reason) if there were any longer any pagans in existence.

Thus have we witnessed the final triumph of the church over its open and declared enemy. Before we enter on the history of its civil wars, we will take a view of its own nature and character.

The Christianity of the days of Constantine and his successors is most certainly not that of the Gospel. In effect, with the exception of transubstantiation and image-worship (from neither of which it was far distant), and a few other points of minor importance, it differs little from the system which our ancestors flung off at the time of the Reformation. The church of Rome is, in fact, very unjustly treated when she is charged with being the author of the tenets and practices which were transmitted to her from the fourth century. Her guilt or error was that of retention, not of invention.

The learned author whom we have taken for our principal guide in this part of our work, presents the following brief view of the state of religion at this time‡.

“The fundamental principles of the Christian doctrine were preserved hitherto incorrupt and entire in most churches, though it must be confessed that they were often explained and defended in a manner that discovered the greatest ignorance and an utter confusion of ideas. The disputes carried on in the council of Nice concerning the three persons in the

* Yet Theodosius was not of an intolerant temper. He bestowed the consulate on Symmachus, and he was on terms of personal friendship with the sophist Libanius.

† Hence the heathens were called Pagans (*Pagani*), or villagers, à *pago*.

‡ Mosheim, Ecclesiastical History, Cent. iv. Part ii. chap. 3.

Godhead, afford a remarkable instance of this, particularly in the language and explanations of those who approved the decisions of that council. So little light, precision, and order reigned in their discourses, that they appeared to substitute three gods in the place of one.

“Nor did the evil end here; for those vain fictions, which an attachment to the Platonic philosophy and to popular opinions had engaged the greatest part of the Christian doctors to adopt before the time of Constantine, were now confirmed, enlarged, and embellished in various ways. Hence arose that extravagant veneration for departed saints, and those absurd notions of a certain *fire* destined to purify separate souls that now prevailed, and of which the public marks were everywhere to be seen. Hence also the celibacy of priests, the worship of images and relics, which in process of time almost utterly destroyed the Christian religion, or at least eclipsed its lustre, and corrupted its essence in the most deplorable manner.

“An enormous train of different superstitions were gradually substituted in the place of genuine religion and true piety. This odious revolution proceeded from a variety of causes. A ridiculous precipitation in receiving new opinions, a preposterous desire of imitating the pagan rites and of blending them with the Christian worship, and that idle propensity which the generality of mankind have toward a gaudy and ostentatious religion, all contributed to establish the reign of superstition upon the ruins of Christianity. Accordingly frequent pilgrimages were undertaken to Palestine and to the tombs of the martyrs, as if there alone the sacred principles of virtue and the certain hope of salvation were to be acquired. The reins being once let loose to superstition, which knows no bounds, absurd notions and idle ceremonies multiplied every day. Quantities of dust and earth, brought from Palestine and other places remarkable for their supposed sanctity, were handed about as the most powerful remedies against the violence of wicked spirits, and were sold and bought everywhere at enormous prices. The public processions and supplications, by which the pagans endeavoured to appease their gods, were now adopted into the Christian worship, and celebrated with great pomp and magnificence in several places. The virtues that had formerly been ascribed to the heathen temples, to their lustrations, to the statues of their gods and heroes, were now attributed to Christian

churches, to water consecrated by certain forms of prayer, and to the images of holy men ; and the same privileges that the former enjoyed under the darkness of paganism were conferred upon the latter under the light of the gospel, or rather under that cloud of superstition that was obscuring its glory. It is true that as yet images were not very common, nor were there any statues at all ; but it is at the same time as undoubtedly certain, as it is extravagant and monstrous, that the worship of the martyrs was modeled according to the religious services that were paid to the gods before the coming of Christ."

Thus doth this learned and candid historian express himself, and we must remind the reader that it is not of the tenth or twelfth century, as might perhaps be supposed, that he is writing, but of the fourth, the period of the Nicene council, the age of Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzen, Basil the Great, Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, and others, who are regarded as the great Fathers of the Church. All these superstitions are to be found in their writings, and mostly mentioned in terms of approbation.

The great parent of the external corruption of the pure and simple faith of the Gospel seems, as we have already observed, to have been the law of Moses : for this law, which was at the same time a system of religious and of civil polity, was, in accordance with the designs of Providence and the state of the world at the time, so framed as to bear a certain degree of resemblance to the civil and religious institutions of the neighbouring nations. Hence it had its priesthood, its sacrifices, its splendid ceremonies and ritual observances. When, therefore, the Christians, from the natural love of parade and magnificence, or with the specious view of gaining over the heathen, wished to introduce rites and ceremonies into the church, they found them ready to their hand in the law of the Israelites ; and when once the practice had begun, the step was easy to the introduction of various tenets and practices of heathenism, for which the Mosaic law furnished no precedent.

The Mosaic religion, for example, had no mysteries and no mythology and worship of heroes, yet the Christianity of the fourth century had both. We have already shown how the simple rites of baptism and the Eucharist were converted into mysteries. The notion of their importance became every day more and more deep and solemn ; they were termed *awful*

and *tremendous* mysteries by the greatest of the Fathers, and such were the miraculous powers ascribed to the elements of the Eucharist, that St. Ambrose in a public discourse affirmed, that his own brother, happening to have them about his person, was by their efficacy saved in a shipwreck.

Christianity obtained its heroes and mythology in the following manner. The memory of the Martyrs (*i. e.* witnesses), or those who had testified their faith in Christ by sealing it with their blood, and in a less degree that of the Confessors, who had shown their willingness to do the same, was naturally held in reverence and respect by the members of the church. The principle of human nature from which pilgrimage arises caused the pious to resort to the places where their remains were deposited; these places were soon regarded as being possessed of superior sanctity, which could only arise from the mortal relics of the holy men which lay there; and the sanctity, being inherent in these remains, would of course accompany them if transferred. Hence arose the translation of the bodies of the apostles and other holy men from the humble tombs in which they had hitherto reposed to capital cities and other places, to give holiness to stately churches which were to be erected in their honour. Every, even the smallest, fragment of the body of a saint, everything, in short, that had touched that hallowed frame when animated, was held to possess virtue, and wonderful tales were told each day of the miracles performed by them. As it might seem absurd that the earthly portions of the holy men should possess such power and their spiritual have no influence in the lower world, a kind of ubiquity was ascribed to their glorified spirits, and it was believed that they could hear prayer and give aid to the suppliant. False miracles, false relics, even false saints, were rapidly manufactured*, and the church had soon a mythology which far exceeded in copiousness that of ancient Greece†. A maxim of the most pernicious nature now greatly

* "Certain tombs were falsely given out for the sepulchres of saints and confessors; the list of the saints was augmented with fictitious names, and robbers were converted into martyrs. Some buried the bones of dead men in certain retired places, and then affirmed that they were divinely admonished by a dream that the body of some friend of God lay there," &c. &c. Mosheim, *ut supra*.

† "The sublime and simple theology of the primitive Christians," says Gibbon, "was gradually corrupted; and the monarchy of heaven, already clouded by metaphysical subtleties, was degraded by the introduction of a popular mythology which tended to restore the reign of polytheism."

prevailed in the church, namely, "That it was an act of virtue to deceive and lie, when by such means the interests of the church might be promoted." This had no doubt been of long standing, for pious fraud and pious fiction early began, but it was now at its *acmé*; and even the greatest of the Fathers are charged with acting on this maxim*, and thus transforming Christianity into polytheism and idolatry.

"If in the beginning of the fifth century," says Gibbon, whom we may here safely quote, "Tertullian or Lactantius had been suddenly raised from the dead to assist at the festival of some popular saint or martyr, they would have gazed with astonishment and indignation on the profane spectacle which had succeeded to the pure and spiritual worship of a Christian congregation. As soon as the doors of the church were thrown open they must have been offended by the smoke of incense, the perfume of flowers, and the glare of lamps and tapers, which diffused at noon-day a gaudy, superfluous, and, in their opinion, a sacrilegious light. If they approached the balustrade of the altar, they made their way through the prostrate crowd, consisting for the most part of strangers and pilgrims, who resorted to the city on the vigils of the feast, and who already felt the strong intoxication of fanaticism and perhaps of wine. Their devout kisses were imprinted on the walls and pavement of the sacred edifice, and their fervent prayers were directed, whatever might be the language of their church, to the bones, the blood, or the ashes of the saint, which were usually concealed by a linen or silken veil from the eyes of the vulgar. The Christians frequented the tombs of the martyrs in the hope of obtaining from their powerful intercession every sort of spiritual, but more especially of temporal blessings. They implored the preservation of their health or the cure of their infirmities, the fruitfulness of their barren wives, or the safety and happiness of their children. Whenever they undertook any distant or dangerous journey they requested that the holy martyrs would be their guides and protectors on the road; and if they returned without having experienced any misfortune, they again hastened to the tombs of the martyrs to celebrate with grateful thanksgivings their obligations to the memory and relics of those heavenly patrons. The walls were hung round with symbols of the favours which they had received; eyes and hands, and feet of

* Mosheim, *ut supra*, Paragraph xvi.

gold and silver; and edifying pictures, which could not long escape the abuses of indiscreet or idolatrous devotion, representing the image, the attributes, and the miracles of the tutelary saint. The same uniform original spirit of superstition might suggest in the most distant ages and countries the same methods of deceiving the credulity and of affecting the senses of mankind; but it must ingenuously be confessed that the ministers of the Catholic church imitated the profane model which they were impatient to destroy. The most respectable bishops had persuaded themselves that the ignorant rustics would more cheerfully renounce the superstitions of paganism if they found some resemblance, some compensation, in the bosom of Christianity. The religion of Constantine achieved in less than a century the final conquest of the Roman empire, but the victors themselves were insensibly subdued by the arts of their vanquished rivals."

Nothing is more characteristic of the corruption which Christianity had undergone than the high honour in which the various classes of ascetics were held. These useless or pernicious beings now actually swarmed throughout the eastern empire, and were gradually spreading themselves into the West. We have shown how asceticism has been derived from the sultry regions of Asia, and how it originates in the Gnostic principles. It had long been insinuating itself into the church; but after the establishment of Christianity, it burst forth like a torrent, spreading from Egypt over Syria, Mesopotamia, and the other provinces at such a rate, that "in a short time," observes Mosheim, "the East was filled with a lazy set of mortals, who, abandoning all human connexions, advantages, pleasures and concerns, wore out a languishing and miserable life amidst the hardships of want and various kinds of suffering, in order to arrive at a more close and rapturous communion with God and angels."

Of these fanatics there were two classes, the Cœnobites and the Eremites, a branch of which last were the Anachorites*. The former, as their name denotes, lived together in a fixed habitation under an *abbot*, a word signifying *father*. The founder of this order was a man named Antony, who drew together a number of the Eremites of Egypt, and gave them fixed rules of conduct. There is a life of this hero of the

* Κοινοβιακοί, *livers-in-common*; Ἐρημίται, *dwellers-of-the-desert* (ἐρημος), whence our word Hermit; Ἀναχωρηταί, *retirers*. The general term was Μοναχοί, *solitaries*, whence our Monk.

monastic orders, which has been written by the great Athanasius*. The Eremites, on the contrary, dwelt solitary in caves or in wretched cottages of the desert; while the Anachorites, rejecting even this faint semblance of humanity, lived like the beasts of the field, wandering without certain abode, lying down wherever night overtook them, and feeding on the spontaneous produce of the earth, shunning the sight and the society of all human beings. The most distinguished of the Eremites was Paul, a recluse of the Thebais, a kind of semi-savage, whose life and acts St. Jerome did not think it beneath him to record as an ensample of true Christian holiness and perfection. Beside the above-mentioned classes of ascetics, we read of an order named in Egypt Sarabaites, who travelled about from place to place working fictitious miracles, selling false relics, and performing various other frauds to deceive the credulous multitude. These, like the corresponding Mohammedan dervishes, were mostly notorious profligates: heavy complaints are made also of the Cœnobites; but the hermits were in general mere fanatics or spiritual madmen.

The hope of acquiring heaven by virginity and mortification was not confined to the male sex; woman, with the enthusiasm and the devotional tendency peculiar to her, rushed eagerly toward the crown of glory. Nunneries became numerous, and were thronged with inmates. Nature, however, not unfrequently asserted her rights, and the complaints and admonitions of the most celebrated Fathers assure us that the unnatural state of vowed celibacy was productive of the same evils and scandals in ancient as in modern times.

The state of morals among Christians in general was, according to the testimony of the contemporary Fathers and other writers, extremely low. "When," says the writer already quoted, "we cast an eye toward the lives and morals of Christians at this time, we find, as formerly, a mixture of good and evil, some eminent for their piety, others infamous for their crimes. The number, however, of immoral and unworthy Christians began so to increase, that the examples of real piety and virtue became extremely rare. When the terrors of persecution were totally dispelled; when the church, secured from the efforts of its enemies, enjoyed the sweets of prosperity and peace; when the major part of bishops exhibited to their flock the contagious examples of arrogance,

* The next place in fame to St. Antony is occupied by St. Pachomius.

luxury, effeminacy, animosity and strife, with other vices too numerous to mention; when the inferior rulers and doctors of the church fell into a slothful and opprobrious negligence of the duties of their respective stations, and employed in vain wranglings and idle disputes that zeal and attention which were due to the culture of piety and to the instruction of their people; and when (to complete the enormity of this horrid detail) multitudes were drawn into the profession of Christianity, not by the power of conviction and argument, but by the prospect of gain or by the fear of punishment,—then it was indeed no wonder that the church was contaminated with shoals of profligate Christians, and that the virtuous few were in a manner oppressed and overwhelmed by the superior numbers of the wicked and licentious. It is true that the same rigorous penitence which had taken place before Constantine the Great, continued now in full force against flagrant transgressors; but when the reign of corruption becomes universal, the vigour of the law yields to its sway, and a weak execution defeats the purposes of the most salutary discipline. Such was now unhappily the case: the age was sinking daily from one period of corruption to another, the great and the powerful sinned with impunity, and the obscure and indigent alone felt the severity of the laws.”

When such was the state of morals, it is natural to be supposed that heresy and schism should prevail, and the unity of the church be torn by feud and faction. We shall therefore proceed to enumerate the principal sects and heresies of the fourth century.

The first of these was the Donatists, so named from Donatus, one of their most active partisans. It was a sect, not a heresy, for the orthodoxy of its members never was questioned. It originated in the following circumstance. On the death of the bishop of Carthage in 311, the clergy and people of that city chose the archdeacon Cæcilianus for his successor, and he was consecrated by the bishops of Africa Minor without waiting for those of Numidia. These last, highly offended, summoned Cæcilianus before them; his disappointed competitors were active in their hostility, and a wealthy lady, named Lucilla, whom he had reprimanded for her superstitious practices, with all a woman's appetite for vengeance, lavished her money on the Numidians to keep up their zeal. Cæcilianus having refused to submit to their jurisdiction, they declared him unworthy of his dignity, and appointed in his

stead his deacon Majorinus ; and the church of Carthage had thus two rival bishops. The reasons given for the sentence against Cæcilianus were, that Felix of Aptungus, by whom he was consecrated, was a Traditor, and that he himself when a deacon had shown in the time of the late persecution great cruelty toward the martyrs and confessors, actually leaving them to perish for want of food in their prisons.

The Donatists having appealed to Constantine, that emperor (313) directed the bishop of Rome, aided by three Gallic prelates, to examine the cause. The decision was in favour of Cæcilianus, who was acquitted of the charges brought against him, as also was Felix of Aptungus, whose cause was examined by the proconsul of Africa. The Donatists were dissatisfied, and the emperor ordered (314) a greater number of prelates to meet at Arles and examine the cause anew. The result of this inquiry also was adverse to them ; they then appealed to the emperor in person, who examined the cause at Milan (316) and confirmed the preceding sentences. They acted after this with so much insolence, that Constantine lost patience, and deprived them of their churches, banished their bishops, and even put some of their more refractory prelates to death.

As the Donatists were numerous and powerful, tumults ensued, which Constantine sought in vain to allay. The savage and ferocious populace, which sided with them under the name of Circumcellions, massacred, ravaged, and plundered their opponents all through the province ; and matters were approaching to a civil war when Constantine abrogated the laws made against the Donatists. The emperor Constans endeavoured to heal the schism, but the Donatists would listen to no terms, and the Circumcellions even ventured to give battle to the imperial troops. They were, however, defeated, and a persecution ensued which lasted till the accession of Julian, when the Donatists again raised their heads. Their numbers were so great that they counted no less than four hundred bishops of their party ; but they split into two factions. The eloquent Augustine, bishop of Hippo, wrote, preached, and spoke against them ; and this sect, the offspring of episcopal arrogance, gradually died away.

The æra of the establishment of Christianity witnessed another schism in the church of far greater and more lasting importance than that caused by the Donatists. This was the

celebrated Arian controversy, of which we will now briefly trace the history.

The language of the New Testament respecting the dignity of Christ is lofty, but at the same time involved in a certain degree of obscurity, if we may venture so to express ourselves, which acting on the natural diversity of human minds, has in all ages caused a difference of opinion to exist on this mysterious subject*. It would probably have been better if the church had been content on this, as on other high matters, to confine itself strictly to Scripture language; and not to have attempted to be "wise beyond what is written." On this, however, as lying without our province, we venture not to speak decidedly; our task is simply to state facts and opinions.

That the Christians of the first century worshiped Christ, is a fact not to be disputed; the testimony of Pliny is conclusive on the subject. They believed firmly in his divinity, but they did not anxiously seek to fathom the mystery which enveloped it. Yet there were those, as we have seen, when treating of the Gnostic sects, who speculated on this lofty subject; and in the church itself, Praxeas and others advanced some very hazardous conjectures. As the fondness for Platonism advanced, that portion of the Christian doctrine which seemed most akin to the airy speculations of the Athenian sage, drew more and more the attention of learned Christians; and about the middle of the third century, Sabellius, a bishop or presbyter of Cyrene in Africa, advanced a theory which drew to him a considerable number of followers. He maintained that a certain *energy* proceeded from the Father and united itself to the Son, the man Jesus, and he regarded the Holy Spirit as in the same way a portion of the Father. Hence the Sabellians are called Patripassians. The opinions of Sabellius were, however, refuted by Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria.

Beryllus, bishop of Bozrah in Arabia, taught that Christ did not exist before Mary, but that at the time of his birth, a *spirit* issuing from God himself, and therefore a portion of

* No one surely will deny the sense, the learning, or the honesty of those who have held opinions different from the one generally received on this subject. If any one text more than another would seem to make in favour of Arianism, it is Phil. ii. 6—9; yet Dr. Lardner, in his Letter on the Logos, declares that it was this very text that made him a Socinian!

the Divine Being, was united to him. Beryllus was refuted by Origen, and he acknowledged and recanted his error.

Paul, the celebrated bishop of Samosata, a man whom looseness of morals, and pride and arrogance, fostered by wealth, had rendered generally odious, was degraded from his episcopal dignity by a council in the year 269, on account of his heretical opinions on this subject. He appears to have held that the Son and Holy Ghost exist in God as *reason* and *activity* exist in man; that Christ was born a mere man, but that the *reason* or *wisdom* of the Father descended on him, and abode with him while on earth, and that hence he might, though improperly, be called God.

It will be observed that the substance of these heresies of the second and third centuries, was the confounding of the Son and Holy Ghost with the Father. The church, on the other hand, had frequently decided that there was a real difference, and that three distinct persons existed in the Deity, but without making any exact definition of the nature of their relation; and the utmost liberty of sentiment and expression was allowed respecting it. The most prevalent opinion in Egypt and the adjacent countries is said to have been that of Origen, who held that the Son was *in* God, as reason is in man, and that the Holy Ghost was simply the *divine energy*—a notion not very far removed from Sabellianism.

In the year 319, in an assembly of the clergy of Alexandria, the bishop Alexander took occasion to communicate to them his sentiments on this head, and he asserted that the Son was not only of the same eminence and dignity, but of the same *essence* with the Father. One of the presbyters, named Arius, treated this opinion as false, and as little removed from Sabellianism. He was then led to state his own opinions, which tended to the opposite extreme; for he held that the Son had been created by the Father before all things, but that time had elapsed before his creation; that he was created out of nothing; that he was the instrument by whom the Father gave existence to the universe; he was superior, therefore, to all other beings, but inferior, both in nature and dignity, to the Father. These opinions, when promulgated, found numerous favourers in Egypt and elsewhere, but Alexander caused them to be condemned in two councils which he summoned, and their author to be excommunicated. Arius withdrew to Palestine, whence he wrote numerous letters to eminent men, and drew many of them over to his

sentiments. The controversy was maintained with great heat ; and the emperor Constantine, who at first treated it as trifling and unimportant, and wrote to the parties enjoining peace, was at length induced to summon a general council for its decision.

This council, the first of those named Œcumenical or General, met at Nicæa in Bithynia in the year 325. Three hundred and eighteen bishops, it is said, appeared in it, and the emperor in person was present at their deliberations. They commenced with personal altercation, and presented the emperor with libels or written accusations against each other, which Constantine, however, burned, exhorting them to peace and unity. Of the proceedings of this council we have only very imperfect accounts, but its decision was against the Arians. It was determined that the Son was consubstantial (*ὁμοούσιος*) with the Father, as it is expressed in the Nicene creed. The council further terminated the dispute about the time of keeping Easter, regulated some points of discipline, and then separated. It had been very near coming to a resolution of imposing on the clergy the yoke of celibacy, such progress had that unnatural tenet of the Gnostics made in the church.

Persecution was of course employed against the defeated party, and Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, and others were banished ; but an Arian, who had been commended to the emperor by his sister when on her death-bed, found means to convince him that the decision of the council was unjust, and Arius, Eusebius and others were recalled from exile. Athanasius, the successor of Alexander, however, refused to restore Arius to his rank and office in the church, for which he was himself deposed, by a council holden at Tyre in 335, and banished to Gaul. But the people of Alexandria refused to admit Arius, and he died the following year at Constantinople, of a bowel complaint, as it would appear, which some suspect was brought on by poison administered by his enemies, who affected to view in it a judgement of heaven. The moral character of Arius, it may be here observed, was without stain, and of his religious sincerity there seems to be little ground of doubt.

Of the sons of Constantine, two were orthodox, but Constantius, into whose hands the entire empire finally fell, was strongly attached to the Arian system. Persecution and seduction were employed against the Homoſians ; frequent

synods were convened; so that, as Ammianus observes, "by the troops of bishops who were hurrying backwards and forwards on the beasts devoted to the public service, to the synods, as they call them, in order to draw the whole sect to their own opinions, the entire posting establishment was well nigh ruined," and Athanasius expressed his fears that the clergy would thereby draw on themselves the derision and contempt of unbelievers. At length a general council of the East was held at Seleucia in Isauria in the year 359, and one of the West the following year at Rimini (*Ariminum*) in Italy. The former separated without coming to any decided conclusion; the latter, which sat seven months, was by proper management brought to sanction a creed sufficiently Arian for the emperor's purpose, and "the whole world groaned," says Jerome, "and wondered to find itself Arian." Julian was indifferent, Jovian and Valentinian were orthodox but tolerant, Valens was an Arian and a persecutor. Theodosius was rigidly orthodox, and the second general council which he assembled at Constantinople (381), condemned the Arians anew. Intolerant edicts were forthwith issued against them, they were deprived of their churches, banished, and otherwise persecuted. Their sect gradually declined in the East; it had never flourished in the West; but the Goths and other barbarians who had been converted by Arians, carried their religious system with them when they became conquerors; and it was not till the close of the sixth century that Arianism became extinct in Spain.

The Arians shared the general fate of all who venture to exercise the powers of their mind on points beyond human comprehension; they at length came to hold different shades of opinion, and thus became subdivided into sects. Their varieties may, however, be reduced to three:—1. The primitive and proper Arians, who held simply that the Son was created out of nothing. 2. The Semi-Arians, who asserted that the Son was of *similar* essence (*ὁμοιοούσιος*) with the Father, but by a peculiar privilege, not by nature. This was the doctrine favoured by Constantius, and it was the prevalent sentiment in the council of Seleucia. 3. The Aëtians, or Eunomians, so named from their chiefs Aëtius and Eunomius, who may perhaps be regarded as pure Arians, for they held that the Son was *unlike* (*ἀνόμοιος*) the Father, and of *another* essence (*ἑτεροούσιος*). Of the Acacians, Eusebians, and other minor divisions, we will not speak.

The Arian controversy gave rise to other heresies. Apollinarius, bishop of Laodicea, in his zeal for the divinity of Christ, went near to denying his humanity. He held that the body of Christ had only had a *sensitive* soul, and that the divine nature assumed in him the office of the *rational* soul, whence it seemed to follow that his divine as well as his human nature suffered on the cross. This opinion, we may perceive, was indebted for its origin to the author's Platonism.

Marcellus, bishop of Ancyra, regarded the Son and Holy Ghost as emanations of the divine nature, which, after performing the functions appointed to them, were to return into the substance of the Father. Hence it plainly followed that there could not be three distinct persons in the Godhead.

Photinus, bishop of Sirmium, the disciple of Marcellus, taught that Jesus was born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary; that the Word, *i. e.* a divine emanation or ray, descended on him, and that hence he was called the Son of God, and even God; that the Holy Ghost was only a virtue proceeding from the Deity. These opinions were condemned by both orthodox and Arians, and Photinus was degraded from his dignity.

Macedonius, a Semi-Arian, being deposed from the see of Constantinople in 360, by the influence of the Eunomians, taught openly an opinion which he had hitherto held in secret, namely, that the Holy Ghost is a divine energy diffused through the universe, and not a person distinct from the Father and Son. The second general council was assembled at Constantinople in 381, chiefly on account of this heresy. It completed what that of Nicæa had left imperfect, establishing the doctrine of three persons in one God, which is still generally received. It also condemned and anathematized all the heresies hitherto known, and it assigned the first rank after the bishop of Rome to the bishop of Constantinople.

Such were the principal heresies which divided the church in the fourth century. They all arose from the vain attempt of rendering clear and definite that which had been left obscure and mysterious; and they were combated too often by force and cruelty rather than by reason and charity. The fourth was in fact a century of persecution; as soon as the church obtained temporal power it abused it; for churchmen are nothing more than men; he who has power will take delight in its exercise; and when he can silence an opponent

by force, he will be willing to avoid the more tedious course of reasoning, or the nobler one of tolerance. In this condemnation the orthodox and the Arians are alike included.

In consequence of its establishment as the religion of the state, the church underwent a change in its constitution. The emperor assumed the entire control of its external administration. He alone had the power of convening a General Council; he appointed judges to decide religious controversies; he took cognizance of all civil causes between members of the hierarchy; regulated disputes between the bishops and people, and exercised a general superintendence over the church. The bishops on their part had made a monopoly of the internal administration; people and presbyters alike were excluded from their original share, and of the ancient government of the church there now remained nothing more than the shadow.

The government of the church was modeled after that of the state. The prelates of the four principal cities of the empire answered to the four prætorian prefects, and seem even in this century to have been termed Patriarchs. The Exarchs, corresponding with civil officers of the same title, had the inspection of several provinces. The Metropolitans had the government of one province; the Archbishops were over certain districts; the Bishops were next in rank; the inferior clergy, headed by Arch-presbyters and Arch-deacons, completed the sacred edifice.

The bishop of Rome, chiefly in consequence of his superior wealth and magnificence, and the civil dignity of his see, enjoyed a certain pre-eminence in rank, but nothing more. He had no power of making laws for the church or of appointing bishops to their sees, and the other prelates strenuously maintained their equality with him, as deriving their authority from the same divine source.

The fourth century and the early part of the fifth were the golden age of the literature of the early church. The most distinguished of the Fathers then flourished, and a large proportion of their works have come down to modern times. We will here enumerate some of the principal.

Athanasius, the secretary and the successor of Alexander in the see of Alexandria, was throughout the whole of his life the invincible opponent of Arianism. In his opposition to that heresy he braved the resentment of emperors; and he was five times expelled from his episcopal throne and

passed twenty years of his life in exile. His energy was indomitable, his sincerity was beyond question; his talents qualified him to rule an empire. As a writer and a speaker he was clear, forcible and persuasive; but his style was unpolished, and his learning was inferior to that of some of his contemporaries*.

Gregory, named Nazianzen from the town of Nazianzes in Cappadocia, of which his father was bishop, was a man of great piety and considerable learning and eloquence. He also was an inveterate foe of Arianism; and Theodosius, when in his zeal for orthodoxy he obliged the Arian prelate of Constantinople to resign his dignity, seated Gregory by force of arms on the archiepiscopal throne. But the pious prelate finally experienced the ingratitude of courts and bishops, and he resigned his see and retired to a solitude in his native province, where he passed the remaining years of his life in the cultivation of poetry and the exercise of devotion; for his heart was naturally tender and his genius elegant.

The rival of Gregory in genius and in eloquence, was his early friend, companion and countryman, Basil, surnamed the Great, archbishop of Cæsarea. But Basil had a pride of character from which Gregory was free, and the real Christian knowledge of the great promoter of oriental monasticism may not unreasonably be called in question. Basil and Gregory Nazianzen may be termed the great Christian Sophists. In their works, as in those of Libanius, the anxiety as to form and manner in preference to matter and import, may be discerned; the dignity of simplicity was unknown to or despised by them, and the glitter of false eloquence assumes its place in their writings.

Gregory, bishop of Nyssa, the brother of St. Basil, was also a writer of some eminence. His oration on the life of Gregory the Wonder-worker, proves him, however, to have been a man of great credulity.

Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea, was the author of various works. It is to his Ecclesiastical History that we are chiefly indebted for our acquaintance with the early fortunes of the church, and his Life of Constantine is a principal source of our knowledge of the events of that emperor's reign. But the credit of this prelate as a historian, is greatly diminished

* The account of Athanasius given by Gibbon (chap. xxi.) is in the historian's best manner, and does him credit. It shows that "even in a bishop he could spy desert."

by the rule which he declares he had laid down for his guidance, namely, to relate nothing to the disadvantage of those whom he celebrates, of which proceeding we have noticed an instance in his suppression of the murder of Crispus. He justifies this conduct by the specious, but untrue, pretext that this course is the more edifying one; it being more edifying and profitable, for example, to blazon forth the virtues of the early Christians than to narrate their dissensions and portray their wickedness and apostasies. History would thus become mere panegyric, and be of little more use than romance. Happily the prelate did not always adhere to his own rule, and he occasionally lets us see that all was not purity and perfection in the church.

These were the most distinguished fathers of this century who used the Greek language. The following wrote in Latin.

Lactantius, named the Christian Cicero from the elegance of his rich and copious style, is supposed to have been an African. His principal work, the *Divine Institutes*, is a refutation of paganism. His own notions of Christianity seem to have been of a more philosophic cast than those of most of his contemporaries. Like the apologists in general, his arguments often are weak, and his conclusions not justified by his premises.

Ambrose, a native of Gaul, the Becket of antiquity, was the civil governor of Liguria. When on the occasion of a dispute between the orthodox and the Arians for the vacant see of Milan (374), he addressed the people in the cathedral in order to appease the commotion, he was greeted with the unanimous cry, "We will have Ambrose for our bishop." Ambrose, who was thirty-four years old, had not yet been baptized, his religious instruction had necessarily been extremely slight, and in his desire to escape the elevation, for which he deemed himself unfit, he publicly committed some acts of gross injustice and immorality. But the people cried, "Thy offence be upon our heads"; they drew him from a concealment which he had sought, and conducted him in triumph to Milan. He was thus forced to yield, and on the eighth day after his baptism he was consecrated. He immediately made over the whole of his property to the church or the poor; and spiritual ambition took entire possession of his soul. In the cause of orthodoxy he resisted Justina, the Arian mother of Valentinian II.; in the cause of the authority of the church, he humbled even the great Theodosius.

As a writer, Ambrose is entitled to but moderate praise. His works discover a fondness for the prevalent superstitions of the age, and he lays claim to the power of performing miracles. He was an able statesman, a bold ambitious prelate, but a man of unblemished private life.

Augustine, bishop of Hippo Regius in Africa, was a man of considerable mental power. He was engaged in continual controversy with the Donatists and other heretics. His writings are numerous; his most remarkable work is his *Confessions*, the earliest piece of autobiography that we possess. Augustine entered more deeply into the abstruse questions of grace, free will, and original sin than the Fathers in general. He is regarded as the chief author of the opinions known by the name of Calvinism.

Jerome, a native of Illyricum, had conceived such a passion for a monastic life, that he left his own country and shut himself up in a convent at Bethlehem, where he devoted all his days to devotion, study, and composition. He applied himself to the Hebrew language, and translated the Old Testament into Latin; and as a translator and critic he ranks far above his contemporaries. He also engaged warmly in controversy, and earned the fame of being the most foul-mouthed of all the Fathers. On heretics and reformers alike the vials of his wrath were poured forth; the opposers of mortification, celibacy, pilgrimage, saint-worship and other superstitions which he chose to admire and recommend, however exemplary their lives, received no better treatment than the obstinate heretic or sinner from this most choleric of saints. Even age brought no cooling to his fervent spirit, and his very latest writings are as fierce and fiery as those composed in his prime of life.

Such were the principal Fathers of the fourth century; and viewing their writings and those of their predecessors and successors, we think that any person of candour will agree with us in saying, that neither in critical skill, in learning, in judgement, or in correct morality, can they stand a comparison with the protestant divines of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, or even with the Gallican divines of the same period. In gaudy glittering theatric eloquence, a Basil, a Gregory, a Chrysostom may claim the precedence; but what work can the ancient church produce to be placed along side of the Ecclesiastical Polity of Hooker? or where can we find in it reasoning equal to that of Chillingworth

and Barrow? The Fathers may be read with profit, but cannot be safely taken as guides, unless we are willing to end in submission to the church of Rome*. The Christian religion is contained in the New Testament alone, and is thence to be derived, by the application of the principles of sound criticism in a spirit actuated by the sincere love of truth.

We will conclude this chapter by an account of the Manichæan heresy.

This heresy, which arose in the middle of the third century, may be regarded as the last and most permanent form of Gnosticism. Its founder, from whom it derived its name, was Manes, a Persian by birth, and one of the sacerdotal caste of the Magians, who embraced Christianity and endeavoured to amalgamate it with his original faith. Of the history of his life little is known with certainty. He is said to have been put to death by the Persian king Varanes I.

As the foundation of his system Manes laid down the two principles of Light and Darkness, with their respective chiefs (the Ormuzd and Ahriman of Persian theology) and their countless myriads of subordinate spirits. The prince of Darkness was long ignorant of the existence of the realm of light, but when he accidentally discovered it he invaded it. The armies of Light, headed by the First Man, opposed him, but could not prevent his seizing a large portion of it, and mingling it with matter. The Living Spirit, the second leader of the troops of Light, had more success; yet still much of the pure element remained immersed in matter. From the mixture the prince of Darkness formed the parents of the human race, who had therefore a material body, in which were two souls, one sensitive and lustful, the other rational and immortal, as being produced of Light. The Living Spirit then created the earth out of matter, as a habitation for the human race, in order to their gradual purification from the influence of corrupt matter; and to aid them in their efforts God produced from his own substance two beings, named Christ and Holy Ghost, the former of whom (the Persian Mithras), a splendid substance, subsisting in and by himself, filled with life and infinite in wisdom, resided in the sun; while the latter, also luminous and animated, pervaded the atmosphere of the earth, illumining the minds of men, giving fertility to the soil, and drawing out from it the particles of celestial heat, and restoring them to their native region.

* In effect, the chief use of the works of the Fathers is that they enable us to trace the progress of the corruption of Christianity.

The Supreme Deity sent a succession of angels and holy men to admonish and exhort the souls imprisoned in matter. At length he directed Christ to quit his abode in the sun; and taking on him the semblance of a body, to appear on earth. Christ obeyed the mandate, performed miracles, and gave precepts to man; but the prince of Darkness stirred up the Jews against him, and in appearance he suffered death on the cross. He re-ascended to the sun, having appointed apostles to propagate his religion, and promised a Paraclete or Comforter, who would add what was needful to his doctrine, and dispel all error from the minds of his servants. This great Paraclete was Manes, and those who obeyed the laws of Christ as enlarged by him, would gradually be freed from the influence of matter, but not wholly in this life; for after death they must first proceed to the moon, which is composed of purifying *water*, after an abode in which of fifteen days, they were to ascend to the sun, whose *fire* would remove all remaining stains. The souls of the wicked were after death to migrate into the bodies of animals and other natures till they should have expiated their guilt. The world was finally to be consumed with fire, and the prince and powers of Darkness be compelled to return to and abide for ever in their original gloom and misery.

The moral system of Manes was severe and rigorous in the extreme; but aware that celibacy, long fasting, and mortification were not suited to mankind in general, he made a distinction similar to one already noticed*, dividing his followers into the Elect and the Hearers, from the former of whom alone obedience was exacted to his ascetic system.

Manes rejected all the books of both the Old and the New Testament, except St. Paul's Epistles, which, however, he regarded as greatly interpolated and corrupted. He gave his disciples a gospel of his own, named Ertang, dictated to him, as he said, by God himself. The Manichæan assemblies had always a president, who represented Jesus Christ, twelve rulers or masters, and seventy-two bishops, to correspond with the apostles and disciples; under the bishops were presbyters and deacons, all selected from the body of the Elect, and the hierarchy was thus completed.

The Manichæan system long continued to flourish. It spread itself over both the empires. We believe there is little doubt, that those, who under the names of Albigenes,

* See above, p. 281.

Paulicians, Cathari, and other denominations, were so cruelly persecuted by the church of Rome in the middle ages, were the descendants of the Manichæans. There is reason to suppose that the mistresses and the loves of the troubadours of the South of France were not earthly; that the conventional language, retained by the Soofees in Persia, had been carried by the Manichæans to Spain and France; that in Italy, this language, which had hitherto been confined to religion, was by Frederic II. and his friends extended to politics, and made the bond of union of the Ghibellines; and that it is only by a knowledge of it, that the writings of Dante, Petrarca, Boccaccio, and the other writers of that age, can be understood*. In fine, it might appear that Manichæism eventually led to the Reformation.

CHAPTER VII.†

HONORIUS. VALENTINIAN III., ETC.

A.U. 1148-1229. A.D. 395-476.

Division of the empire.—Rufinus.—The Goths in Greece.—Gildo.—Invasion of Italy by Alaric.—By Radagaisus.—Murder of Stilicho.—Claudian.—Alaric's second invasion.—Sack of Rome.—Death of Alaric.—Barbarians in the empire.—Valentinian III.—Boniface and Ætius.—Genserich.—His conquest of Africa.—Attila.—Theodoric.—Battle of Châlons.—Attila's invasion of Italy.—Murder of Ætius.—And of Valentinian.—Maximus.—Sack of Rome by Genserich.—Avitus.—Majorian.—Severus.—Anthemius.—Nepos and Glycerius.—Romulus Augustus.—End of the empire.—Conclusion.

Honorius.

A.U. 1148-1176. A.D. 395-423.

WITH Theodosius the unity of the Roman empire terminated; it never again obeyed a single ruler, and henceforth the empires of the East and the West are as distinct as any independent kingdoms of ancient or modern times. As the history of that of the East during the remaining period of our narrative presents no events of much political importance,

* The proofs will be found in the various works of Signor Rossetti, the learned and sagacious expounder of Dante.

† Authorities: Zosimus, Claudian, Jornandes, the Ecclesiastical Historians, and the Chroniclers.

we will confine ourselves to that of the West, and rapidly relate its fall.

Theodosius had two sons: to the elder, named Arcadius, a youth of eighteen years of age, who had been left behind in Constantinople, was assigned the empire of the East; to the younger, Honorius, a boy of eleven years, that of the West*. The care of both the emperors and their dominions was committed by Theodosius, on his death-bed, to Stilicho, a man of great talent, civil and military, and of incorrupt integrity, to whom he had given his niece and adopted daughter Serena in marriage, and had raised him to the high rank of master of both the cavalry and infantry of the empire.

After the decease of Theodosius, Stilicho remained in Italy with the young Honorius. The chief minister of Arcadius was Rufinus, the prefect of the East, a native of Gaul, who having devoted himself to the practice of the law at Constantinople, by his talents and by his profound hypocrisy gained the favour of the late emperor, who had gradually raised him to his present dignity. As soon as death had relieved him from the restraint which his knowledge of the latent vigour of Theodosius' character imposed, Rufinus flung off the mask, and gave free course to his cruelty and his avarice. In the gratification of this last ignoble passion he passed all bounds. Justice was sold, offices were sold, oppressive taxes were imposed, testaments were extorted or forged, ruinous fines were exacted, properties were confiscated on the slightest pretexts. The wealth thus acquired was retained by the most rigid parsimony, and Rufinus was consequently the object of hatred to many and of sincere attachment to no one.

The ambitious prefect hoped to unite his only daughter to his youthful sovereign; but he seems not to have reflected on the secret machinations of a despotic court; and while he was absent on a journey of vengeance to Antioch, where, without even a shadow of proof, he judicially murdered the count of the East, a secret conspiracy in the palace, headed by the chamberlain Eutropius, undermined his power. Discovering that their young monarch had no affection for his destined bride, the confederates planned to substitute for her the fair Eudoxia, the orphan daughter of Bauto, a Frank general in the imperial service. They inflamed the imagination of the emperor by their commendations of her charms; the view of

* The province of Illyricum was divided between the two empires.

her picture confirmed the impression, and when on the day fixed for the royal nuptials after the return of Rufinus (Apr. 27), the bearers of the diadem, robes and ornaments of the future empress issued from the palace, they entered not the mansion of the prefect, but the house in which Eudoxia was dwelling, and conducted the daughter of Bauto to the imperial residence. The sense and spirit exhibited by the new empress soon filled Rufinus with alarm, and it is not unlikely that in the rage of disappointed ambition, and the dread of a hostile faction, he may, as he is charged, have resolved to aim at the empire, and with this view have secretly encouraged the Goths and Huns to renew their ravages.

But Rufinus had a foe to encounter more formidable than the eunuchs of the palace. He had long since drawn on himself the enmity of Stilicho, and that general, who had already divided between the royal brothers the jewels and other private property of their deceased father, now prepared to apportion between the two empires the troops which had been assembled under the imperial standard for the late war. Under the pretext of the ravages of the Goths he marched in person at the head of the troops that were to return to the East, and he had reached Thessalonica when he received an order from Arcadius, dictated by the fears of Rufinus, to send on the troops, but to advance no further himself. He obeyed, committing to the soldiers the execution of the designs which he had formed against Rufinus. The army, led by Gainas, a Goth, marched for the capital; not a soldier divulged the secret of Stilicho; Rufinus was led to hope that they would aid his ambition, and he freely distributed to them a portion of his hoarded treasures. When they were within a mile of the city (Nov. 27) he and the emperor advanced to salute them. As he was passing along the ranks the wings gradually closed and surrounded him: Gainas then gave the signal; a soldier plunged his sword into his breast, and he fell dead at the feet of the emperor. His lifeless body was abandoned to the rage of the populace, who treated it with every species of horrid indignity. His wife and daughter found sanctuary in a church, and they ended their days in a convent at Jerusalem*.

* The power now fell into the hands of the eunuch Eutropius, whom Claudian, the panegyrist of Stilicho, lashes in so fearful a manner. Of the poet's satiric powers the following is a specimen:—

Asperius nihil est humili, cum surgit in altum;

The Goths, under the guidance of an intrepid young prince named Alaric, after ravaging the northern provinces, had advanced into Greece (396). They nowhere encountered opposition; from Mount Olympus to the extremities of Tænaron and Malea they ravaged the country and pillaged the towns. At length (397) Stilicho debarked an army on the isthmus of Corinth, and advanced into Arcadia to engage the invaders. By skilful movements he forced them to retire to Mount Pholoe, and having diverted the course of the only stream that supplied them, and drawn a line of posts round them, he withdrew to share in the pleasures of the stage and dance in the cities of Greece. The soldiers, not being controlled by the presence of their general, quitted the works and spread themselves over the country. Alaric, watching his opportunity, marched out with his booty and captives, crossed the Corinthian Gulf, and was master of Epirus before Stilicho knew of his escape. The Gothic prince had meantime been secretly negotiating a treaty with the ministers of Arcadius, and just at this conjuncture he was appointed to the military command of eastern Illyricum, and Stilicho received orders to depart from the dominions of the emperor of the East.

The attention of Stilicho was next directed to Africa, where Gildo, the brother of the unfortunate Firmus, ruled in nearly total independence; for after the suppression of that rebel, the government of Africa had been conferred on Gildo, who had risen to the rank of count in the service of Rome. At a distance from the seat of empire, and therefore secure from punishment, he indulged all his passions without restraint, and the unhappy country groaned beneath his tyranny. Persons of wealth were poisoned in order to obtain their properties; the fairest matrons and maidens, after being

*Cuncta ferit dum cuncta timet; desævit in omnes,
Ut se posse putent; nec bellua tetrrior ulla
Quam servi rabies in libera terga furentia.
Agnoscit gemitus, et pœnæ parcere neascit
Quam subiit, dominique memor quem verberat odit.
Adde quod eunuchus nulla pietate movetur,
Nec generi natiave cavet. Clementia cunctis
In similes, animosque ligant consortia damni.
Iste nec eunuchis placidus, sed pejus in aurum
Æstuat; hoc uno fruitur succisa libido.*

In Eutrop. I. 181 seq.

forced to submit to the embraces of the tyrant, were abandoned to his swarthy Moorish and Gætulian guards. His excesses were unnoticed by Theodosius, who resided at a distance, but he saw that from Stilicho he had no favour to expect, and he therefore craftily tendered his allegiance to the throne of Arcadius. The ministers of that prince, regardless of faith or honour, grasped at the delusive offer, and signified to Stilicho their right to Africa. Their claim was met by a decided negative. Stilicho instantly accused the African as a rebel to the senate, and that body declared him the enemy of the republic. The prudent Symmachus suggested the danger of the corn-ships being kept back, and the city being thus exposed to famine; but Stilicho had already provided for this case, and abundant supplies of corn from Gaul were poured into the granaries of Rome.

The command of the force destined for the reduction of the Moorish tyrant was committed to his own brother Mascezel, whom he had forced to fly for his life, and whose innocent children he had murdered. The army of Mascezel consisted of only five thousand Gallic veterans, but these were deemed sufficient to overcome the naked and disorderly barbarians, who, to the number, it is said, of seventy thousand, marched beneath the banners of Gildo. Shortly after his landing (398) Mascezel gave the signal for engagement. He himself advanced before his troops with offers of pardon; one of the enemy's standard-bearers met him, and Mascezel, on his refusal to yield, struck off his arm with his sword. The standard fell to the ground; the supposed voluntary act was imitated by all the other standard-bearers: the cohorts proclaimed the name of Honorius; the barbarians dispersed and returned to their homes, and the victory was thus gained without the slightest effusion of blood. Gildo fled to the sea-shore, and throwing himself into a small vessel, made sail for the East; but the wind drove him into the port of Tabraca, where he was seized by the inhabitants and cast into prison, and he terminated his existence by his own hand. Mascezel on his return was received at court with great favour; but shortly after, as he was riding with Stilicho over a bridge, his horse threw him into the river, and the attendants, observing that Stilicho smiled, gave him no aid, and he was drowned*. The guilt of his death was accordingly charged on the envy of Stilicho.

* So Gibbon "softens," as he terms it, the narrative of Zosimus, "which

The young emperor, now in his fourteenth year, was united in marriage at this time with his cousin Maria, the daughter of Stilicho; but the consummation was deferred, and ten years after Maria died a virgin. Honorius, who was utterly devoid of talent or energy, passed his days in feeding poultry, and Stilicho, while he lived, was in reality the monarch of the West.

This able man had soon again to measure arms with the ambitious Alaric. The Gothic prince, in addition to his rank of master of Illyricum, was now, by the unanimous suffrages of his countrymen, king of the Visigoths. For some years he acted a dubious part between the emperors of the East and the West, but he finally (400) resolved on the invasion and plunder of Italy. By arts or by arms he was for three years withheld from treading its plains, but at length (402) the court of Milan was alarmed by intelligence of the approach of the Goths. The council of the young emperor proposed an instant flight to Gaul. Stilicho, alone undismayed, pledged himself, if the court would only remain tranquil during his absence, to return, within a limited time, at the head of a powerful army. He accordingly crossed the Alps in the depth of winter, collected the troops of Gaul and Britain, and took into pay a large body of Alemannic cavalry. But while he was thus engaged the Goths had advanced to Milan, and Honorius had fled and shut himself up in the town of Asta (*Asti*) in Liguria, where he was closely besieged by the Gothic monarch. Stilicho hastened to his relief; by skilful manœuvres he cut off the supplies of the barbarians, and he gradually drew round them a line of fortifications.

During these operations the festival of Easter arrived (403). While the Goths were devoutly celebrating it, their camp at Pollentia (twenty-five miles south-east of Turin) was assailed by the imperial cavalry. Alaric speedily drew out and formed his men; the battle was maintained throughout the day with mutual valour, but in the evening the Goths retired. Their camp was forced; the booty and captives were all recovered, and the wife of Alaric remained a prisoner in the hands of the victors. Alaric was, however, preparing, at the head of his remaining troops, to cross the Apennines and push on for Rome; but his council of warriors forced him to listen to the

in its crude simplicity," he says, "is almost incredible." Zosimus simply says (v. 11.) that the guards on a given signal from Stilicho pushed him into the river, and that Stilicho laughed as the stream carried him away.

offers of Stilicho, and conclude a treaty for the evacuation of Italy. He repassed the Po with the secret design of seizing the city of Verona, advancing rapidly into Germany, passing the Rhine, and invading the defenceless provinces of Gaul. But Stilicho, who had a secret intelligence with some of the Gothic chiefs, learned his design, and at a short distance from Verona the Goths were assailed on all sides by the imperial troops. Their loss was considerable; Alaric himself owed his safety to the swiftness of his horse. He then assembled his remaining forces amid the adjacent rocks, where he prepared to stand a siege; but hunger and desertion soon forced him to accept another treaty, and Italy was at length delivered from the Goths, though but for a time.

In the following year (404) Honorius visited the ancient capital of the empire. He entered it in triumphal pomp, Stilicho seated in his chariot by his side. His abode in the capital is distinguished by an edict abolishing the combats of gladiators; for as these inhuman contests were going on one day in the amphitheatre, an Asiatic monk named Telemachus, urged by a generous impulse, sprang into the arena to separate the combatants. The enraged spectators overwhelmed him with a shower of stones, and he perished a martyr in the sacred cause of humanity. When the rage of the people subsided they were filled with penitence; a ready obedience was yielded to the edict issued on the occasion by the emperor, and the barbarous and inhuman gladiatorial combats ceased for ever.

As invasions of the barbarians were now matter of constant apprehension, and neither Rome nor Milan was considered to be sufficiently secure for the imperial residence, Honorius fixed his abode at Ravenna. This city, situated on the Adriatic, was strongly fortified, and its only approach on the land side was by a causeway leading through a deep morass*. Strong thus by nature and art, Ravenna henceforth continued for more than three centuries to be the seat of government in Italy.

The apprehensions of the emperor and his court were not unfounded, for within two years after the departure of Alaric a numerous host of Germans poured into Italy (406). This host, which is stated at 200,000 fighting men, accompanied by their wives, children and slaves, was composed of adventurers

* Owing to the recession of the waters of the Mediterranean, or rather to the elevation of the coast, Ravenna is now four miles from the sea.

from most of the German and Sarmatian tribes. The leader-in-chief was named Radagaisus. The task of defending Italy fell as before to Stilicho; he caused the feeble emperor to shut himself up in Ravenna, while he himself, with an army of between thirty and forty thousand men, the utmost force he was able to collect, took his post at Pavia (*Ticinum*). The barbarians advanced unopposed, pillaging the towns and cities on their way; they crossed the Po and the Apennines, and laid siege to the city of Florence in Tuscany. Stilicho, who had at length been joined by the troops which he had summoned from the provinces, and by barbarian auxiliaries, now advanced to its relief. Adopting his former policy, he avoided a general action, and gradually drew a strong line of fortifications around the position occupied by the host of Radagaisus. Famine soon spread its ravages among the men and horses; their furious assaults on the lines of circumvallation were repelled, and they were at length obliged to surrender at discretion. Radagaisus was beheaded by order of Stilicho, the common barbarians were sold for slaves.

The principal nations composing the host of Radagaisus were the Suevians, Burgundians, Vandals and Alans, and only a portion of their immense force had entered Italy. In the following winter those who had remained in Germany crossed the Rhine never to retreat, and in less than two years, after devastating the Gallic provinces, they had reached the Pyrenees. At this time the trans-Alpine provinces had ceased to obey the emperor Honorius. The army of Britain had invested with the purple a private soldier of the name of Constantine (407), and on his passing over to Gaul all the cities which had escaped the barbarians yielded him submission. The troops of Honorius besieged him in Vienne, but they were forced to make a precipitate retreat over the Alps, and in the following year (408) Constantine with little difficulty made himself master of Spain.

After the retreat of Alaric from Italy, relations of friendship were formed between that prince and Stilicho; and the Goth, quitting the service of the emperor of the East, was appointed commander of the Roman forces in all Illyricum; the eastern portion of which region Stilicho re-claimed from the court of Byzantium. A semblance of war ensued between the two empires, and Alaric carried on some feeble operations in Epirus and Thessaly, for which he furnished a long account of expenses to the court of Ravenna, intimating, though in

respectful terms, that a refusal to comply with his demands might prove hazardous. Stilicho, deeming it the wiser course to yield, his authority silenced all opposition, and the sum of 4000 pounds of gold, under the name of a subsidy, was promised to Alaric.

While the empire was thus distracted and menaced on all sides, court-intrigue deprived it of the only man capable of saving it. Olympius, a man whom the influence of Stilicho had advanced to a high office at court, and who concealed his vices under the mask of extreme piety, was secretly undermining his benefactor in the mind of the feeble emperor. He made Honorius believe that Stilicho had formed designs on his life and throne. As the troops, which on account of the menaces of Alaric were lying north of the Po, were composed of different elements—some devoted, others hostile to Stilicho—Honorius, at the instigation of Olympius, announced his intention of reviewing them in their different quarters. He visited Stilicho at Bologna, where the barbarian troops (those most devoted to the general) lay, and thence proceeded to Pavia, to the camp of the Roman troops, the enemies of Stilicho and the barbarians. By the arts of Olympius these troops had been prepared to enact the part required of them, and after listening to an address from the emperor they rose and massacred all the friends of Stilicho, including the highest officers of the empire. Honorius, who was ignorant of the projected massacre, was filled with terror, but he was finally persuaded to approve of what had been done and to commend the actors. Stilicho, on hearing of the massacre at Pavia, held a council of the leaders of the auxiliaries; they were unanimous in urging him to vengeance, but he hesitated to involve the empire in a civil war. His confederates retired in disgust at his irresolution, and in the night his camp was assailed by the troops of a Gothic leader named Sarus, who was one of the band of his enemies. His faithful Hunnish guards were cut to pieces, and he himself escaped with difficulty. He retired to Ravenna and took sanctuary in a church; by artifice and perjury the bishop was induced to yield him up, and he was beheaded as soon as he had passed the sacred threshold (Aug. 23). His son was shortly after put to death; his daughter Thermantia, who, like her sister, was the emperor's virgin-wife, was divorced; his memory was defamed; his friends were tortured and murdered.

Among those involved in the fate of the great Stilicho was

the poet Claudian, the last ancient poet in whose verses the Latin language appears with any lustre. Claudian was born at Alexandria in Egypt. The Latin, therefore, was not his mother-tongue; yet he made it the vehicle of poetry, which for grace and eloquence had not been equaled, since the Augustan age. Panegyric and satire were the principal themes of his muse. He may be called the poet-laureate of Stilicho, whose victories he celebrates and whose enemies he overwhelms with invective. His diction is harmonious though not perhaps perfectly pure; his descriptions are rich and luxuriant; he possessed the rare talent of elevating the mean and diversifying the similar without offending the good sense or taste of the reader. In a word, Claudian closes with dignity the band of Latin poets*.

While by the base arts of courtiers Italy was thus deprived of her only stay, Alaric lay encamped on her confines. As if to aid him in his projects, the fanatic Olympius caused an edict to be issued excluding all those who did not hold the orthodox creed from civil and military employment; and on one day the wives and children of the barbarians in the Roman service (a body of 30,000 men) were massacred in the towns of Italy, in which they were dwelling as hostages. These troops vowed a heavy revenge, and Alaric, certain of their co-operation, hesitated not to enter Italy as the avenger of the death of Stilicho, and of his own wrongs. Stilicho had perished in the month of August, and in the following October Alaric passed the Alps, the Po, the Apennines, and Rome for the first time since the days of Hannibal saw a foreign enemy before her gates. The Gothic forces closely blockaded all the approaches, and stopped the navigation of the Tiber. Famine and pestilence soon began to spread their ravages through the crowded population. At length two senators were sent as envoys to the Gothic camp. When led before Alaric, they spoke of the dignity and number of the Roman people, and bade him to prepare for battle if he would not grant reasonable terms. "The thicker the hay the easier it is mowed," replied the Goth, with a laugh. He then demanded as a ransom all the gold, silver, and precious move-

* Gibbon (chap. xxx.) draws the character of this poet with tolerable accuracy. He evidently admired him. We cannot, however, concede, that in Claudian "it would not be easy to produce a passage that deserves the epithet of sublime or pathetic; to select a verse that melts the heart or enlarges the imagination." Of the last, at least, there are many.

ables in the city, and all the barbarian slaves. He finally consented to take 5000 pounds of gold, 30,000 of silver, 3000 of pepper, 4000 robes of silk, and 3000 pieces of scarlet cloth, and on the delivery of these articles Alaric led his troops into Tuscany for the winter. His army, augmented by the barbarians who had been in the Roman service, and by 40,000 slaves, counted at the least 100,000 fighting men (409).

The early part of the year was spent in fruitless negotiations for peace. Olympius was in his turn undermined by the intrigues of the palace, and forced to seek his safety in flight. A brave barbarian officer, named Gennerid, was placed at the head of the army, and 10,000 Huns were taken into pay. But the intrigues of the palace still prevailed, and an oath was extorted from the principal officers of the state and army, never under any circumstances to consent to a peace with the insolent invader of Italy. All hopes of accommodation being thus cut off, Alaric led his troops once more toward Rome. By making himself master of the port of Ostia*, where the corn for the supply of the city was warehoused, he speedily put an end to all thoughts of resistance, and the senate, at his dictation, invested with the purple Attalus, the prefect of the city. The new emperor bestowed on his benefactor the rank of commander-in-chief of the armies of the West, which he had sought in vain from the ministers of Honorius, and made Adolphus (*Athaulf*), the Gothic monarch's brother-in-law, count of the domestics, with the custody of the royal person. Milan cheerfully acknowledged the new emperor, whom Alaric conducted in triumph almost to the gates of Ravenna, where an embassy from Honorius, offering to divide the empire with him, entered the camp. Attalus insisted on his resignation, and so desperate in reality did the affairs of Honorius now seem, that Jovius, his principal minister, and Valens, his general, two of the envoys, went over to the side of his rival.

Honorius, in despair, was preparing to fly to the eastern court, when a body of four thousand veterans landed in Ravenna. As these sufficed for its defence, he now felt somewhat re-assured, and he was soon further cheered by the arrival of a large sum of money, remitted by count Heraclian, who had defeated the troops sent to Africa by Attalus, and distressed the Romans by preventing the exportation of corn and oil. Alaric, wearied with the insolence and imprudence of the empe-

* See above, p. 78.

ror of his own creation, and acted on by the arts of the treacherous Jovius, at length publicly stripped him of his diadem and purple, which he sent to Honorius as a pledge of amity. He then advanced to within three miles of Ravenna, in the full expectation that a peace would now be concluded; but Sarus the Goth, at the head of three hundred men, sallied from one of the gates and cut to pieces a division of his troops, and a herald soon after appeared to declare that the emperor would never enter into friendship with the invader of Italy.

The Gothic monarch, bent on vengeance, led his troops once more to Rome. The senate prepared to make a desperate resistance, but treachery rendered their plans unavailing. At midnight (Aug. 24, 410) the Salarian gate was silently opened, and the Goths were admitted; and Rome, for the first time since the days of Camillus (a space of eight centuries), became the prey of a foreign enemy. All the horrors and atrocities consequent on the capture of a large town by storm were felt by the unhappy city; but the evils were mitigated in many instances by the Christian feeling of the Arian Goths; and it is acknowledged that Rome suffered far less at their hands than it did afterwards in the 16th century from the catholic troops of the orthodox emperor Charles V. Numbers were of course reduced from affluence or comfort to slavery or poverty, and the provinces of Africa and the East were filled with fugitives from the ancient capital of the empire.

Alaric remained only six days in Rome; he then led his troops southwards, captured Nola and other towns, and on coming to the straits of Rhegium, prepared to pass over and make the conquest of Sicily prelude to that of Africa. But a storm shattered his transports, and a premature death terminated his visions of dominion. To form a grave for the mighty Alaric, the course of the Busentinus, a small river which washes the walls of Consentia, was diverted, and his corpse, royally arrayed, was deposited in its bed. The stream was then restored to its original channel; and that the secret of the resting-place of Alaric might never be known, a massacre was made of all the prisoners who had been engaged in the work.

The royal dignity after the death of Alaric was conferred on Adolphus. This prince, who was of a prudent and moderate temper, effected a treaty with the court of Ravenna, and the Visigoths at length (412) evacuated Italy after a possession of four years. But they never again returned to their

former seats; Adolphus, in the character of a Roman general, led his troops against the invaders and the usurpers of southern Gaul, and his authority was speedily acknowledged from the Mediterranean to the Ocean. A marriage into the royal house of Theodosius also contributed to give him consequence. Placidia, the daughter of that monarch by Galla, the daughter of Valentinian, had been detained in the Gothic camp since the period of the first siege of Rome by Alaric, and though the court of Honorius rejected with disdain Adolphus' proposals of marriage, and insisted on her restitution, the princess herself was less haughty, and she readily gave her hand to the brave and handsome monarch of the Goths.

Count Heraclian, who had been loyal to Honorius when his cause seemed nearly hopeless, became a rebel when Italy was delivered of the Goths. He assumed the purple (413), and embarking a numerous army in a large fleet sailed from Africa and entered the Tiber. But as he was on the road to Rome he was met and defeated by one of the imperial generals, and he fled back to Africa in a single ship. He sought refuge in the temple of Memory, at Carthage, whence he was taken and beheaded.

It would be tedious were we to relate the actions and deaths of Constantine, of Maximus, Jovinus, Sebastian and others, who at this period aimed at empire in Gaul and Spain, and perished in the attempt. We therefore pass them over in silence, and proceed to relate the conquest of Spain by the Goths.

The fruitful and wealthy provinces of Spain, which in consequence of its position had been strangers to war for the last four centuries, with the exception of the irruption of the Germans in the time of Gallienus, were now to suffer in common with the rest of the empire. The barbarians who had passed the Rhine in 406 had reached the foot of the Pyrenees, and the barbarian mercenaries, called Honerians, to whom the usurper Constantine had committed the passes of those mountains, turning traitors to their trust, admitted the confederate Germans and Alans into the heart of Spain (409). Rapine and devastation traversed the land from the Pyrenees to the straits of Gades, and when Spain had thus been exhausted of its strength and wealth, the conquerors set down resolved to occupy it permanently. The Suevians and Vandals settled in the north, the Alans spread over the central region from sea to sea, a branch of the Vandals took possession of Bætica.

They were not, however, suffered to remain long undisturbed. Adolphus, covetous of military fame, readily accepted the task of recovering Spain for the empire. He led his Goths through the Pyrenees (414), and surprised the city of Barcelona. His career of victory, however, was cut short ere long (Aug. 415) by the dagger of an assassin; and Singaric, a brother of Sarus, was placed on the vacant throne. The six children of Adolphus by a former marriage were put to death, and Placidia was treated as a slave by this tyrant. But *he* also perished by assassination on the seventh day of his reign, and the choice of the nation gave the throne to a chief named Wallia. Within the space of four years this valiant warrior restored Spain to the empire, and he then (419) repassed the Pyrenees, and fixed his royal residence at Toulouse, ruling the country from the Loire to the confines of Spain.

When the Goths were thus established in the south and west of France, the Burgundians obtained permanent possession of the Upper Germany, and their name remains in its modern appellation. The Lower Germany was at the same time occupied by the Franks. Armorica, or the north-west portion of Gaul, and the island of Britain, being left to their own resources, assumed an attitude of independence.

In this condition of his empire, that most feeble and contemptible of princes, Honorius, emperor of the West, died (423) of dropsy, after an inglorious reign of twenty-eight years.

Valentinian III.

A.U. 1176-1208. A.D. 423-455.

Honorius died childless, but the western branch of the line of Theodosius did not expire with him. Placidia, whom we have seen treated with such indignity after the death of her husband, had been redeemed for 600,000 measures of wheat, and her brother had obliged her to give her hand to a brave and faithful general, named Constantius, by whom she had two children, a daughter named Honoria, and a son Valentinian. At her impulsion Constantius claimed and obtained the title of Augustus and a share in the empire; but he died shortly after, and by the intrigues of a steward and a nurse, enmity was excited between the emperor and his sister, to

whom he had been hitherto most fondly attached. As the Gothic soldiers took the part of their queen, and the city of Ravenna was filled with tumult, Placidia was induced to retire from the scene. She went to the court of Byzantium, where she was most kindly received by the reigning emperor, Theodosius II., the son of Arcadius; and when a few months after intelligence arrived of the death of Honorius, the Eastern monarch prepared to assert by arms the claim of her son to the vacant throne, which had been occupied by John, the Primicerius, or principal secretary of the late emperor.

It was some time before the troops of the East were in readiness to attempt the conquest of Italy. At length (425) they set forth; Aquileia was surprised, and one of the Eastern commanders, who had been made a prisoner and carried into Ravenna, having contrived to gain over the garrison, the usurper was seized and beheaded. Though Theodosius might have asserted his claim to the whole empire, he contented himself with the addition of western Illyricum to his dominions, and he caused his young cousin Valentinian to be invested with the monarchy of the West. A marriage, which afterwards took place, was agreed on, Valentinian being to espouse, when of suitable age, Eudoxia, the daughter of Theodosius. As the young monarch was now only six years old, the government of himself and his empire naturally fell into the hands of his mother, and she retained her power for a space of five-and-twenty years.

The armies of the West were commanded by two able men, Boniface and Ætius. The former, who held the government of Africa, had been at all times attached to the cause of Placidia; the latter, who was of barbaric origin, had joined the late usurper, and had even brought a force of 60,000 Huns as far as the confines of Italy to his aid when he heard of his fate. Having negotiated a treaty for the retreat of the barbarians, he entered the service of Valentinian, and he soon gained great influence over the mind of Placidia. This influence he employed for the destruction of his rival. He secretly persuaded Placidia to recall Boniface from his government, and he at the same time advised Boniface to refuse obedience, assuring him that his death was intended. Boniface fell into the trap laid for him. He armed in his defence, and repelled the first attacks made on him; but feeling that he could not long resist single-handed, he sent to propose an alliance to the king of the Vandals (428).

When the Goths recovered Spain from Honorius, the Suevians and Vandals still remained unsubdued in Galicia. Dissension soon broke out between them; the Vandals prevailed; but on the approach of an imperial army, they broke up and marched for Bætica, and having there defeated a superior force of Romans and Goths, they became masters of the entire province, which has derived from them its name of Andalusia.

The king of the Vandals at this time was named Genseric. He is described as of middle stature, slow of speech, a contemner of luxury, prone to anger, covetous of gain, skilled in gaining nations and in sowing dissensions among his enemies. In the May of 429 he embarked his troops in vessels furnished by Boniface and the Spaniards, and crossed the straits of Gades. His whole force, composed of Vandals, Alana, Goths and others, did not exceed 50,000 men; but he easily induced the Moors to unite with him, and the persecuted Donatists regarded as a deliverer the Christian though not orthodox Genseric. Boniface, when too late, saw the error he had committed; the letters of Ætius being shown and compared in an interview between him and an envoy sent from court, he discovered the fraud of which he had been the victim, and he resolved to return to his allegiance; and when Genseric refused to evacuate the country, he led out his troops and gave him battle. But he met with a total defeat (430); the whole country far and wide was now exposed to the ravages of the Vandals, and the cities of Carthage, Cirta and Hippo Regius alone remained to the empire. In this last, the modern Bona, count Boniface shut himself up, and held it for fourteen months against the Vandals. At length (431) being reinforced by troops from the East, he marched out and gave them battle, but again met with a total defeat. Giving now all up for lost, he got on shipboard and sailed for Italy. Placidia received him with favour and raised him to high rank, but Ætius who was in Gaul soon appeared with a body of barbarians. The quarrel between the rivals was decided by arms (432); victory declared for Boniface, but he received a mortal wound in the conflict. Ætius was proclaimed a rebel; he sought refuge with the Huns, and the empire thus remained without a general. Nevertheless the progress of Genseric, retarded by other means, was slow. Cirta and Carthage still held out; and it was not till the tenth year after his landing in Africa (439), that the latter was taken, and that by surprise, not force.

Ætius did not long remain in exile. Supported by the arms of 60,000 Huns, he was soon able to dictate his own terms to the empress Placidia, and with the title of Patrician and the command of the entire army, he in effect governed the empire, which he alone was able to preserve from ruin. He still kept up an intercourse with the Huns; he was on terms of friendship with their king, in whose camp his son was educated; he employed Huns in the defence of Gaul, and he placed colonies of Alans in the territories of Valence and Orleans.

The monarch of the Huns at this time was the mighty Attila. His power was obeyed from the banks of the Rhine to far beyond the Volga; the Scandinavian peninsula is said to have yielded him tribute; his possessions extended southwards fifteen days' journey below the Danube; the empire of the East, which he had ravaged to the very gates of Constantinople, paid him an annual subsidy; and all the influence of Ætius had been unable to preserve that of the West from a similar degradation.

Genserik, menaced by both empires, had sought the alliance of the potent monarch of the Huns, and it was at his instigation that Attila had invaded the eastern empire, and thus obliged an expedition destined for Africa to be recalled. The same awful prince was the cause of the Hunnish hordes being poured into the western empire. The occasion was as follows.

The successor of Wallia on the throne of the Visigoths was Theodoric, the son of the great Alaric, a prince of considerable ability and vigour. Ambitious to extend his dominions, he laid siege to the city of Arles, but Ætius hastened to its defence, and the Goths were forced to retire with loss. Shortly after, count Litorius, a Roman general, advanced at the head of an army of Huns to the very gates of Toulouse, but his rashness brought on him a total defeat and personal captivity. Ætius soon appeared with a powerful force; an instant engagement was expected, but the generals on both sides were prudent, and a treaty of amity was concluded (439). Theodoric thenceforth devoted himself to the promotion of the welfare of his subjects, and he became universally loved and respected. He had six sons and two daughters; the two latter were married, the one to the son of the king of the Suevians in Spain, the other to Hunneric, the eldest son of Genserik. But high as she stood in birth and alliance, the Gothic prin-

cess was doomed to be the victim of tyranny. Genseric, suspecting that she had conspired to poison him, cut off her nose and ears, and sent her back thus mutilated to her father. Theodoric resolved to avenge her injuries; the Romans agreed to supply him with ships, arms and money, and he was preparing for the invasion of Africa, when Genseric once more called on Attila for aid, and the storm was again diverted.

It is also said that Attila was incited to arms by a Roman lady of royal descent. Honoria, the sister of Valentinian, had had an intrigue with her chamberlain Eugenius. When the consequences of her frailty became apparent, her mother sent her away to Constantinople, and caused her to be immured in a nunnery. Hating a life of celibacy and restraint, Honoria despatched a trusty eunuch to Attila with a ring as the pledge of her affection. Attila accepted the gift, and he sent to demand the princess and a share of the empire. His demand was of course refused; and Honoria was sent back to Italy, where the ceremony of her marriage with some obscure person having been performed, she was shut up in prison for the rest of her days.

Urged by the various claimants for his aid, Attila moved from his royal village in the plains of Hungary (451). Divisions of all his subject nations marched beneath his banner. He crossed the Rhine at its confluence with the Neckar, and poured his hordes over the plains of Belgium and France. The celestial aid of saints or the strength of fortifications preserved Troyes and Paris, but other towns and cities were taken and plundered without mercy, and the Hunnish monarch at length pitched his tents beneath the walls of Orleans, which Sangiban, king of the Alans, had engaged to betray. But the plot was discovered, the attacks of the Huns were repelled, and at the sight of the banners of Ætius and Theodoric, who were marching to its relief, the prudent Hun drew off his troops and retired to the plains of Champagne, which were better adapted for the operations of cavalry.

Ætius, aided by the eloquence of the senator Avitus, had succeeded in inducing Theodoric, whose first plan had been to await the invaders within his own territories, to share in the common defence of Gaul. The Burgundians, the Salian Franks, the Saxons, Alans, Armoricans, and others had also been prevailed on to aid the common cause; and at the head of an army composed of such various materials, Ætius and Theodoric prepared to engage the host of Attila.

The armies encountered on the plains of Châlons. Attila, with his Huns, occupied the centre of his line; the Rugians, Herulans, Franks, Burgundians and others were ranged on each side of them; the right wing was formed by the Gepidans, the left by the Ostrogoths. On the side of the allies Sangiban and his Alans were placed in the centre, where they might be watched. Ætius commanded on the left, Theodoric on the right. The battle was long, obstinate and bloody. The Huns easily pierced through the yielding centre, and then directed their whole force against the Visigoths, and Theodoric, as he was cheering his men, fell by the javelin of an Ostrogothic chief. But his son Torrismond, who was stationed on an adjacent eminence, when he saw the Visigoths yielding, hastened to restore the battle, and Attila was forced to retreat. The approach of night saved his troops from a total defeat; they secured themselves within their waggon-fence, and Attila caused a pile to be made of saddles and horse-furniture, determined to fire it, and rush into the flames if his camp should be forced. But the dread of the valour inspired by despair withheld the allies from the attack; and Ætius also feared the power of the Goths if the Huns should be destroyed. He therefore prevailed on Torrismond to be content with the vengeance already exacted for the fate of his father, and to return to Toulouse in order to secure his throne. The allies broke up and retired, and Attila was allowed to repossess the Rhine unmolested.

The policy of Ætius, in thus dismissing the Huns, was fatal to the empire. In the following spring (452) Attila again claimed the princess Honoria and her treasures, and meeting again with a refusal, he advanced and laid siege to Aquileia. After a siege of three months, this important city was carried by assault. All the cities north of the Po surrendered or were taken. Ætius in vain sought to retard the myriads of the barbarians; the timid Valentinian fled to Rome, and an embassy composed of Leo, the bishop of that city, and two eminent senators, was sent to deprecate the wrath of Attila, who now lay encamped on the shores of the lake Benacus. Attila was superstitious; when he was reminded that Alaric had not long survived the taking of Rome, he secretly shuddered at the omen; and he consented, on receiving an immense sum under the name of the dower of the princess Honoria, to evacuate Italy. He retired threatening dreadful vengeance if the princess were not delivered to his

ambassador; but in the following year (453), having drunk too freely on the night of his adding another maiden to his harem, he burst a vessel in his lungs, and was suffocated in his own blood. His funeral was celebrated with magnificence, after the usage of his nation. His mighty empire fell to pieces, and the Huns ceased to be formidable.

Valentinian, worthless and dissolute, instead of viewing in Ætius the saviour of his empire, feared and hated him with all the rancour of a petty mind. The son of Ætius was betrothed to the emperor's daughter; and when one day (454) in the palace his father was urging the immediate marriage, Valentinian drew his sword for the first time in his life and plunged it into the general's bosom, the eunuchs and others hastened to follow his example, and Ætius expired pierced by a hundred wounds. His principal friends were summoned separately to the palace before the event could be known, and all were murdered. The loss of Ætius was universally deplored, and the contempt in which the emperor had been held was converted into abhorrence. "I know not your motives and provocations," said a Roman whom he asked to approve the deed; "I only know that you have acted like a man who cuts off his right hand with his left."

The feeble emperor did not long survive his able general. Among his other vices Valentinian was addicted to gaming. He won one day a large sum of money from a wealthy senator named Petronius Maximus, on whose chaste and beautiful wife he had long cast an eye of lust. As Maximus had not the money about him, the emperor exacted his ring from him by way of security, and he forthwith sent it to his wife with an order in her husband's name to wait on the empress Eudoxia. The lady on arriving at the palace was led into a private apartment; Valentinian soon entered, and extorted by force the favours which she would not yield to solicitation. Her tears and her reproaches when she reached home excited Maximus to vengeance. Two of the guards who had been attached to Ætius readily consented to be his instruments, and as Valentinian was viewing some military sports in the Field of Mars they rushed on and stabbed him, none of those present offering any resistance (Mar. 16, 455).

Maximus, Avitus, Majorian, Severus, Anthemius, Olybrius, Glycerius, Nepos, Augustulus.

A.U. 1208-1229. A.D. 455-476.

The revenge of Maximus may have been stimulated by ambition, for he became the successor of the destroyer of his honour; but the happiness, of which he had enjoyed a large portion when in a private station, departed the moment he mounted a throne, and he was heard to exclaim, in reference to a well-known story, "O fortunate Damocles! thy reign began and ended with the same dinner."

Maximus married his son to the daughter of the late emperor, and as his wife died opportunely he forced the reluctant empress Eudoxia to give her hand to himself. In an unguarded hour he revealed to her the secret of his share in the death of her former husband; and Eudoxia, who had loved Valentinian, worthless and faithless as he was, resolved to avenge him. She sent a secret invitation to Genseric, and ere long a fleet bearing a numerous army of Vandals and Moors entered the Tiber. Maximus hastened to fly from the city; but the moment he appeared in the streets he was assailed by a shower of stones; a soldier gave him his first wound, and his mangled body was flung into the Tiber (June 12). His reign had not lasted quite two months.

As Genseric was approaching the city he was met by a procession of the clergy headed by the bishop Leo. The bold and eloquent prelate, who had turned away the wrath of Attila, was able also to mitigate the ferocity of Genseric, who promised to spare the people and the buildings of Rome. But this promise was little more than illusory. Rome was delivered to pillage for a space of fourteen days; churches, temples and private houses were plundered alike, and thousands of captives, among whom were the empress Eudoxia and her two daughters, were embarked for Africa. This calamity gave occasion to a noble display of genuine Christian feeling on the part of Deogratias, bishop of Carthage. He converted two large churches into hospitals, and himself attended most assiduously to the sick among the unhappy captives.

Maximus had committed the command of the troops in Gaul to the senator Avitus, a native of Auvergne, who, after passing thirty years of his life in the public service, had re-

tired to the enjoyment of private life. Avitus was at Toulouse negotiating a treaty with Theodoric, who by the murder of his brother Torrismond had occupied the Gothic throne, when he received intelligence of the death of Maximus. The prospect of empire attracted him; the Goths gave him their suffrage; an assemblage of the provinces of Gaul at Arles elected him (Aug. 15); the people of Italy submitted to him, and the emperor of the East acknowledged him.

While the new emperor proceeded to Rome, Theodoric, as his general, crossed the Pyrenees to recover Spain, which had nearly all fallen under the power of the Suevians. His success was complete; he effectually broke the Suevian might, and he captured and put to death his brother-in-law their king. But meantime Avitus had ceased to reign. The Romans disliked him as a foreigner, and count Ricimer, a Goth, one of the commanders of the barbarian troops, having acquired fame by a victory over a Vandal fleet off Corsica, took advantage of it, and ordered Avitus to resign his dignity. He obeyed (Oct. 16, 456), and was made bishop of Placentia. But the senate voted his death, and he died or was murdered as he was on his way to secure himself in his native province.

Ricimer, who, as being a barbarian by birth, could not himself mount the throne, governed Italy for some months under the title of Patrician. He then (457) bestowed the purple on his intimate friend Majorian, a man of primitive Roman virtue, who, in the words of the historian Procopius*, "excelled in every virtue all who had ever reigned over the Romans." To restore the state to its former strength by the abolition of abuses, was the great object of this excellent man, and he made with this view many wise and salutary regulations. But the course of decline is not to be stopped; and the reformer Majorian became an object of aversion to the degenerate Romans.

Majorian, who was a warrior as well as a statesman, resolved to achieve the conquest of Africa, and destroy the dominion of the Vandals. As it was only among the barbarians that soldiers were now to be found, he enlisted troops from among the nations north of the Alps. He defeated Theodoric in battle, and having reunited the greater part of Gaul and Spain to the empire, he assembled, in the port of Carthage, a fleet of three hundred ships, with a large number of transports, for the invasion of Africa. It is said that he even

* De Bell. Vandal. i. 7.

ventured to appear as his own ambassador at Carthage, having changed the colour of his hair*. But treachery rendered all his preparations unavailing. Guided by secret intelligence, Genseric succeeded in destroying the imperial fleet in the harbour, and Majorian was forced to consent to a treaty. He returned to Italy to carry on his plans of reformation, and to prepare for future war; but a sedition, fomented by Ricimer, broke out in the camp near Torton, at the foot of the Alps, and Majorian was forced to abdicate. Five days after (Aug. 7, 461) he died, as was said, of a dysentery.

Ricimer, whose object was to reign under the name of another, resolved not to commit again the error of selecting a man of virtue and energy; his choice therefore fell on Severus, a man so obscure, that even his origin is hardly known, and for a space of more than five years he governed Italy (almost all that remained of the empire) under the name of his puppet. But Marcellinus, who commanded in Dalmatia, disdaining to submit to him, held that province in independence; and Ægidius, a general of much ability, maintained his dominion over nearly the whole of Gaul. Meantime the piratic squadrons of Genseric ravaged the coasts of Italy, and Ricimer was forced to seek, as a suppliant, aid from the court of Byzantium.

Arcadius, who died in the year 408, had been succeeded by his son Theodosius II., a child of seven years of age: but during the reign of this prince, who was more conspicuous for piety than for the regal virtues, the empire was in reality governed by his sister Pulcheria, the only one of the descendants of the great Theodosius who inherited any portion of his talents. On his death (450) Pulcheria was proclaimed empress. She had, after the fashionable superstition of that age, made a vow of perpetual virginity; but aware of the prejudices to which her sex was exposed, she selected as her nominal husband a respectable senator named Marcian, a man now sixty years old, and made him her colleague in the empire. Marcian survived his wife; and on his death (457), the patrician Asper, who was in the East what Ricimer was in the West, conferred the vacant dignity on Leo the steward of his household, who proved himself to be a monarch of ability and energy, and scorned to be the mere puppet of the patrician.

It was to this emperor that Ricimer made application for aid against the Vandals. Assistance was promised on condi-

* Procopius, *ut supra*.

tion of the West receiving an emperor chosen by the court of Byzantium. Ricimer accepted the terms, and the person selected (467) was Anthemius, the son-in-law of the late emperor Marcian. On his arrival at Rome (Apr. 12) Anthemius gave his daughter in marriage to Ricimer. Marcellinus readily acknowledged the new emperor, and accepted a command in the expedition prepared against the Vandals. Vigorous exertions were made by both empires; and in the following year (468), while the troops of the West under Marcellinus were recovering the isles of the Mediterranean, an army from Egypt moved westwards, and a fleet of 1100 ships, carrying upwards of 100,000 men, sailed from the Hellespont, and entered the bay of Carthage. Its commander Basiliscus, the brother of Leo's empress, was, however, utterly devoid of talent or experience. Instead of marching at once against the capital, he listened to the insidious proposals of Genseric, till the crafty Vandal, taking advantage of a change in the wind, sent in the night fire-ships among the imperial vessels. Basiliscus fled to Constantinople after the loss of one half of his fleet and troops. Marcellinus was assassinated in Sicily, and that island fell into the hands of Genseric, whose fleets now met nowhere with resistance.

Unity did not long continue between Anthemius and his haughty son-in-law. Ricimer quitted Rome (471) and fixed his abode at Milan. Italy was on the point of being the scene of a civil war, when the mediation of the bishop of Pavia succeeded in averting it. But the delay was brief, for the next year (472) Ricimer encamped with his army on the banks of the Anio, where he was joined by the man whom he had selected for the purple, Olybrius, a noble Roman, the husband of Placidia, the daughter of Valentinian III. Rome, after standing a siege of three months, was taken by storm and pillaged. Anthemius was put to death by order of his ruthless son-in-law, who followed him to the tomb within forty days (Aug. 20), being cut off in the midst of his triumph by a painful disorder. Olybrius himself was carried off by death only two months later (Oct. 23).

The court of Byzantium, after some delay, bestowed the sceptre of the West on Julius Nepos, the nephew of Marcellinus. But meantime, Gundobald, a Burgundian, who had succeeded his uncle Ricimer in the command of his army, had invested a soldier named Glycerius with the imperial purple. Gundobald, however, having departed to assert his claim to

the kingdom of Burgundy, Glycerius did not feel himself strong enough to maintain a contest for the empire, and he retired and became bishop of Salona. Nepos, after a brief reign of less than three years (475), on the occasion of a revolt of the Barbarian troops, abandoned the empire, and fled to his principality in Dalmatia.

These Barbarians in the Roman pay were termed Confederates; they were drawn from various nations, of which the principal were the Herulans, Alans, Turcilingans and Rugians. Their commander was Orestes, a Pannonian by birth, who had been secretary to Attila. On the death of that monarch he had entered the Roman service, and Nepos had raised him to the dignity of Patrician, and given him the command of the army. By his artful conduct Orestes gained the troops over to his interest, and at his impulsion they rose against Nepos. From some unknown motive, Orestes, though not a Barbarian, did not himself assume the purple. He conferred it (476) on his son, named Romulus Augustus, or, as he is usually called, Augustulus, under whose name he preferred to reign. But his power was of brief duration; his barbarian soldiers, excited by the example of their brethren in Gaul, Spain and Africa, where they had acquired permanent landed possessions, insisted on a third part of the lands of Italy being divided among them. Orestes gave a prompt refusal. One of the commanders, named Odoacer, then proposed to his comrades to unite under him, and they would soon, he assured them, make the patrician yield to their demands. Forthwith they flocked from all parts to the standard of Odoacer. Orestes shut himself up in Pavia, but the town was taken by storm, and he was put to death by the victors. His son, on laying down his purple, was allowed to retire to the villa of Lucullus in Campania, with an annual pension of 6000 pieces of gold. Odoacer took the title of king of Italy, under which he reigned for a space of eighteen years, when his dominion was overthrown by the Ostrogoths.

The empire of the West was now at an end. The parts of which it had been composed were never again united; they each formed a separate and independent state. In all the government and the lands were held by the German conquerors. We will briefly notice these new states.

After the defeat and death of Odoacer, the Ostrogoths retained possession of Italy for a term of seventy-five years, when (568) their power was overthrown by the Langobards or Lombards, whose dominion lasted for two centuries.

The Vandals retained possession of Africa till about the middle of the sixth century, when they were conquered by the great Belisarius, the general of Justinian, emperor of the East. Africa remained part of the Eastern empire till it was conquered by the Arabs in the following century.

The Visigoths made themselves masters of the entire Spanish peninsula, which they retained till the period of the invasion of the Arabs. Their dominions in the south of France were all, excepting a small portion, reduced by Clovis, the first king of the Franks.

The Burgundians and Alemans had founded states in Switzerland, the east of France, and along the Rhine; but, like the Goths, they were successfully reduced, and obliged to acknowledge the dominion of Clovis the Frank. Nearly the whole of France obeyed this able prince, but at his death (511) his dominions were divided among his four sons.

In the reign of Valentinian III. the Roman troops had been withdrawn from Britain. The unwarlike inhabitants, unable to defend themselves against the savage Caledonians, called to their aid (449) the Saxon chiefs Hengist and Horsa. Their allies became their enemies, and in a short time the greater part of the island was conquered by the Saxons and their kindred tribes.

We thus have witnessed the rise and progress, the decline and fall, of that mighty empire, which commencing in a village on the banks of the Tiber, finally made the Ocean and the Euphrates its boundaries. Its fall was in the order of Nature, which has set limits to all things human; but it is not unworthy of remark, that at the time when the Roman republic was at the very height of its power, the Tuscan augurs ventured to foretell the period of Roman dominion. According to the rules of their art, they inferred that the twelve vultures seen by Romulus denoted the twelve centuries of rule assigned to his city by the decrees of Heaven. The accomplishment of that prophecy is a curious fact; but history exhibits many such coincidences. The rise of Rome is one of the most extraordinary phenomena in the annals of the world; its fall was an ordinary event, and contains nothing to excite surprise. The Roman empire, as left by Augustus, embraced the whole civilisation of the West, while on all its confines dwelt poor but brave and energetic nations, eager, when an occasion should offer, to rush in and seize its wealth. It was only therefore by the con-

servation of the military spirit, by which it had been acquired,
 that it could be retained, but we have seen how early and how
 totally this spirit became extinct. When the nobles and men
 of property were immersed in luxury and sensual indulgence;
 when the country was depopulated or filled with slaves alone,
 the cities thronged with an idle beggarly turbulent population,
 vigorous only for evil; when the provincials were so beaten to
 the earth by excessive taxation, that the rule of barbarian con-
 querors was looked to as an alleviation; when the noble, ele-
 vating, soul-expanding, religion of the Gospel had been de-
 graded by oriental asceticism into a slavish enervating super-
 stition; when, finally, the defence of the empire against the
 Barbarians was entrusted to the Barbarians themselves, its
 fall was assured. A new order of things was to arise out of
 the union of German energy with Roman civilisation, from
 which, after a series of many centuries, were to result the social
 institutions of modern Europe, the colonisation of the most
 distant regions of the earth, and the mighty political events
 which yet lie hidden in the womb of Time.

APPENDIX.

A. Page 1.—AUTHORITIES.

Dion Cassius wrote the history of Rome from the foundation of the city to his own consulate in the reign of Alexander Severus. Of this work the first thirty-five books exist only in fragments, and the portion from the reign of Claudius to the end only in the Epitome of the modern Greek Xiphilinus. For the period from the death of M. Aurelius to the end Dion is a contemporary authority.

Velleius Paterculus was the contemporary of Augustus and Tiberius (see above, p. 114.); the 2nd book of his history extends from the Viriathian war, B.C. 148, to the death of Livia Augusta, A.D. 29.

Tacitus lived in the period from Nero to Trajan, both inclusive. His *Annals*, in sixteen books, extended from the death of Augustus to that of Nero. Of these the part of the fifth book, containing the fall of Sejanus, the seventh to the tenth, and part of the eleventh, to A.D. 47, and the end of the sixteenth are lost. The greater portion of his *Histories*, which extended from the death of Nero to that of Domitian, has also perished. They end with the conference between Cerialis and Civilis (above, p. 149.).

Suetonius Tranquillus, the contemporary of Tacitus (above, p. 165.), has left minute biographies of the Cæsars from C. Julius Cæsar to Domitian inclusive.

Herodian was the contemporary of Dion Cassius, to whom as a historian he is much inferior. His work extends from the death of M. Aurelius to the reign of Gordian. Gibbon calls him "an elegant" historian, and, to a certain extent he is such; but he is feeble, negligent, devoid of political wisdom, and utterly careless of chronology. He reminds us more of Dionysius Halicarnassensis than of Thucydides.

The *Augustan History* consists of a series of lives of all the emperors and tyrants or aspirants to empire, from Hadrian to Carus and his sons. The authors are Ælius Spartianus, Julius Capitolinus, Ælius Lampridius, Trebellius Pollio and Flavius Vopiscus. As writers, none of them possess any merit; but they may claim some praise on account of the letters and other original documents which they have preserved.

Ammianus Marcellinus, a Greek by birth, wrote in Latin. His object seems to have been to be the continuator of Tacitus, for his work, which extended from the accession of Nerva to the death of Valens, commenced where Tacitus had ended. Of the thirty-one books of which his work originally consisted, the first thirteen are lost; the fourteenth commences with the account of the conduct of the Cæsar Gallus in the reign of Constantius. Ammianus is a judicious, honest, and impartial historian, but his style is inflated and disagreeable.

Zosimus wrote in Greek about the time of the fall of the western empire. His work, of which only six books remain, after a sketch of the history of the emperors from Augustus to Diocletian, relates public events in detail thence to the attack on the Goths by Sarus (above, p. 418.). The remainder of the work is lost, as also are the end of the first and commencement

of the second books, which contained the reign of Diocletian. Zosimus was a pagan, and he is inveterately hostile to Constantine and the Christian emperors.

The Epitomators are in Greek, Zonaras; in Latin, Eutropius, Festus Rufus, Aurelius Victor, and Orosius. The first of these was a modern Greek monk, who wrote a Chronicle in 18 books, which extends from the Creation to the death of the Byzantine emperor John Alexius. Eutropius, who had been secretary to Constantine, and had shared in Julian's expedition to Persia, wrote for the use of the emperor Valens an epitome of the Roman history, from Romulus to the death of Jovian. His work was continued by the Lombard historian, Paulus Diaconus. A similar epitome, embracing the same period, was addressed to Valentinian by Festus Rufus. Under the name of Aurelius Victor, the contemporary of Ammianus, we possess two short pieces; the one *De Caesaribus*, containing brief notices of the emperors from Augustus to Julian; the other, the *Epitome*, similar notices of all from Augustus to Theodosius. The History of Orosius, a Christian presbyter, extends from the Creation to Wallia, the Visigoth king (above, p. 420).

The Panegyrista, Mamertinus, Eumenius, Nazarius, pronounced laudatory discourses before the emperors Maximian, Constantine and Constantius. Mamertinus the younger delivered the eulogium of Julian, Ausonius that of Gratian, and Pacatus that of Theodosius. These laudatory effusions contain many facts of which we find no account elsewhere. It is to be observed that their authors were all born and brought up in Gaul. The modern French have retained the custom of pronouncing *eloges*.

The Ecclesiastical historians also furnish many events to civil history. Eusebius wrote a life of Constantine. The history of Socrates extends from the conversion of that emperor to the 17th consulate of Theodosius II.; that of Sozomen from the same event to the death of Honorius; that of Theodoret from the rise of Arianism to Theodosius II., with whose reign the history of Evagrius commences, and extends into the sixth century. The history of the Arian Philostorgius, of which only fragments remain, extended from the rise of Arianism to the reign of Valentinian III.

The Chronologists, Eusebius Cassiodorus, Jerome, Idatius and others, supply occasional historic facts; so also do the writings of the contemporary Fathers, Ambrose, Jerome, etc. In like manner, the poets Claudian, Sidonius Apollinaris and Prudentius, and the sophists, such as Libanius, are at times historic authorities.

For the affairs of the Goths, their national historian Jornandes is often our best guide.

On looking over this list of authorities, it will be seen that the important reigns of Trajan and Diocletian are those for which we have the least materials: for the former, we have only the Panegyric of Pliny, Xiphilin's epitome of Dion and the Epitomators; for the latter, only these last.

C. Page 14.—THE GERMAN TRIBES.

The following trans-Rhenic German tribes and nations are mentioned in the preceding History. The seats assigned them are either those where they were first found, or where they subsequently settled.

Frisians. In West-Friesland, Gröningen and north part of Over-Yssel.

Chaucans. Along the coast, from the Ems to the Elbe in East-Friesland, Oldenburg and Bremen.

Langobards (i. e. Longbeards). West of the Elbe in Laneburg and Alt-Mark.

Rugians. On the Oder in Pomerania.

Burgundians. Original seats between the Oder and the Vistula, in the Netz district.

Vandals. North side of the Ricsengebürg and Lausitz.

Herulans. Upper Hungary.

Bructerans. To the south of the Frisians, between the Saal and the Ems.

Sicambrians. Along the Rhine, from Emmerich to the Sieg; eastwards to the Bructerans; part of Cleves and adjoining states.

Angrivarians. South of the Chaucans, along the Ems.

Chamavans. From the south of the Angrivarians to the Lippe.

Usipetans. South of the Lippe.

Tencterans. South of the Usipetans; on the Rhine, about Cologne and Bonn.

Cherusceans. In and on both sides of the Hartz forest.

Cattans. South of the Cherusceans, in Hesse, Fulda, Nassau, and parts of Franconia and Westphalia.

Alemans (i. e. All-men). Along the Rhine from the Main to the Necker.

Suevians. Under this general name are included the Quadans, Marcomans and other nations. The proper Suevians seem to have inhabited the modern Suabia.

Marcomans (i. e. March-men or Borderers). In Bohemia and southwards.

Quadans. Along the Danube, from the Gran into Austria and Moravia.

B. Page 11.

GENEALOGY OF THE CÆSARIAN FAMILY.

The following Tables are taken from Ernesti's *Suetonius*, and corrected by Lipsius and Drumann.

STEMMA JULII CÆSARIS

C. Julius Cæsar

e

Marcia.

g-

C. Julium Cæsarem

e.

Cornelia Cianaë

g.

Juliam

n.

Cn. Pompeio M.

Juliam maj.

nups.

L. Pedio

L. Pinario

Q. Pedius.

L. Pinarius.

Juliam min.

nups.

M. Atio

Balbo

Atia

n.

C. Octavio

OCTAVIANUS
AUGUSTUS.

STEMMA OCTAVII ET AUGUSTI.

C. Octavius

ex

Ancharia

g.

Octaviam
maj.

Octaviam
minor.
nups.

Atia

OCTAVIANUM AUG. duxit

Clodium.

Scriboniam,
unde
Julia
n.

Liviam.

C. Marcello
unde

M. Antonio III viro
unde

M. Marcello. M. Agrippæ.
unde
Tiberio Imp.

M. Marcellus Marcella Antonia maj.
Aug. gener. major minor. n.
L. Domitio
Ænobarbo

Antonia
min.

C. Cesar. L. Cesar. Julia, Agrippina, Agrippa
n. n.
L. Emilio Germanico.
Paulo v. Stemma
unde Livie.

Postumus.

1. M. Agrippæ.

2. Julio Antonio.

3. Sext. Apuleio.

Cn. Domitius Domitia maj.
ex n.
Agrippina Crispo Passieno.

Domitia min. Lepida
n.
M. Valerio Messalæ,
unde
Valeria Messalina
ux. Claudii Imp.

Druso
Livie f.
v. Stemma
Livie.

Emilia Lepida
n.
Junio Silano

NERONEM cujus ux.

Octavia Claudii.

Poppæa Sabina, Statilia
Messalina.

M. Silanus. L. Silanus. Junia Calpurnia.

Junia Lepida.

Claudis Aug.

Silanus Junia Claudia Torquatus, uxor Caii Imp.

STEMMA LIVIÆ

Livia

n.

Tib. Claudio Neroni

unde

TIBERIUS CÆSAR

Vipsania Agrippina

nepte Attici

Drusum

qui

e

Livilla Drusi

Agrippina.

n.

1. Cn. Domitio,

unde NERO, Longino.

2. Crispo Passieno. 2. M. Emilio

3. Claudio Imp. Lepido.

Drusilla.

n.

1. L. Cassio M. Vinicio.

unde NERO.

2. Crispo Passieno. 2. M. Emilio

3. Claudio Imp. Lepido.

Cæsar Germanicus

ex Agrippina

Livilla

n.

Druso

Tib. f.

Drusum.

CAIUS

e Cæsonia

Juliam Drusillam.

CLAUDIUS IMP.

e

Plantia. Ælia Petina.

Drusum. Claudiam. Antoniam.

Octaviam. Britannicum.

Valeris Messalina.

1. Cn. Pompeio. Neroni Imp.

2. L. Sullæ.

Tiberium

Cæio occisum.

Juliam

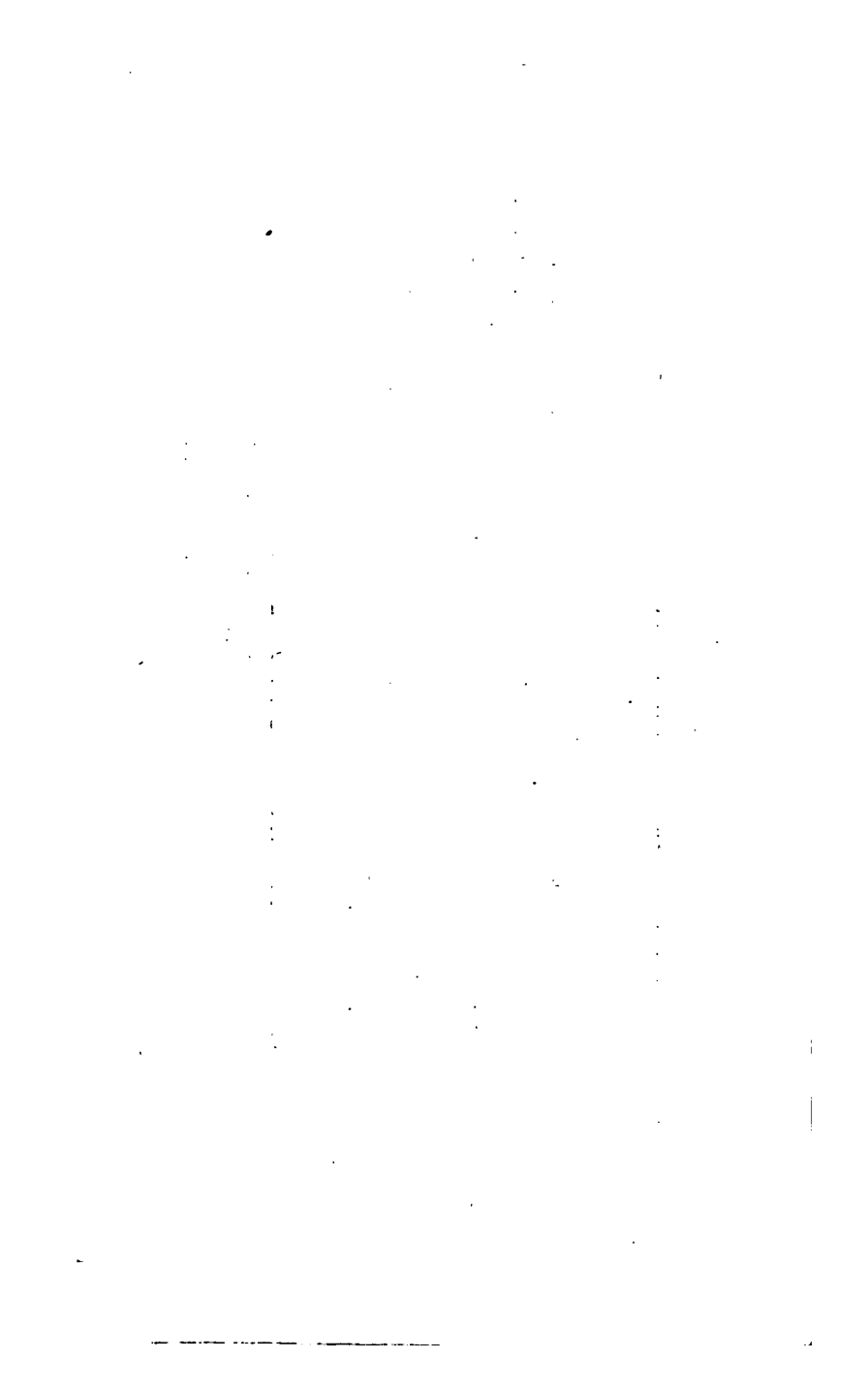
uz nups.

Neroni Rubellio Blando

Germ. f.

unde

C. Rubellius Plantus.



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* * (2) (3) &c., denote 2nd, 3rd, &c., of the name.

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